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A THESIS BY

CLARICE HAINES DUMONT.

1915.

School - Accounting

THE SCHOOL BUDGET IN NEW ENGLAND.

AN HISTORICAL STUDY.

Chapter I.

Schools of the Period of Settlement and Colonization.

The early settlers of New England were mostly Protestants deeply imbued with the ideas of Luther, who was both a religious and also an educational reformer. Coming, too, from England, the pioneers were fairly well educated. It was natural, then, that schools should be organized early in established settlements, and, indeed, New England led all the other colonies in educational progress.

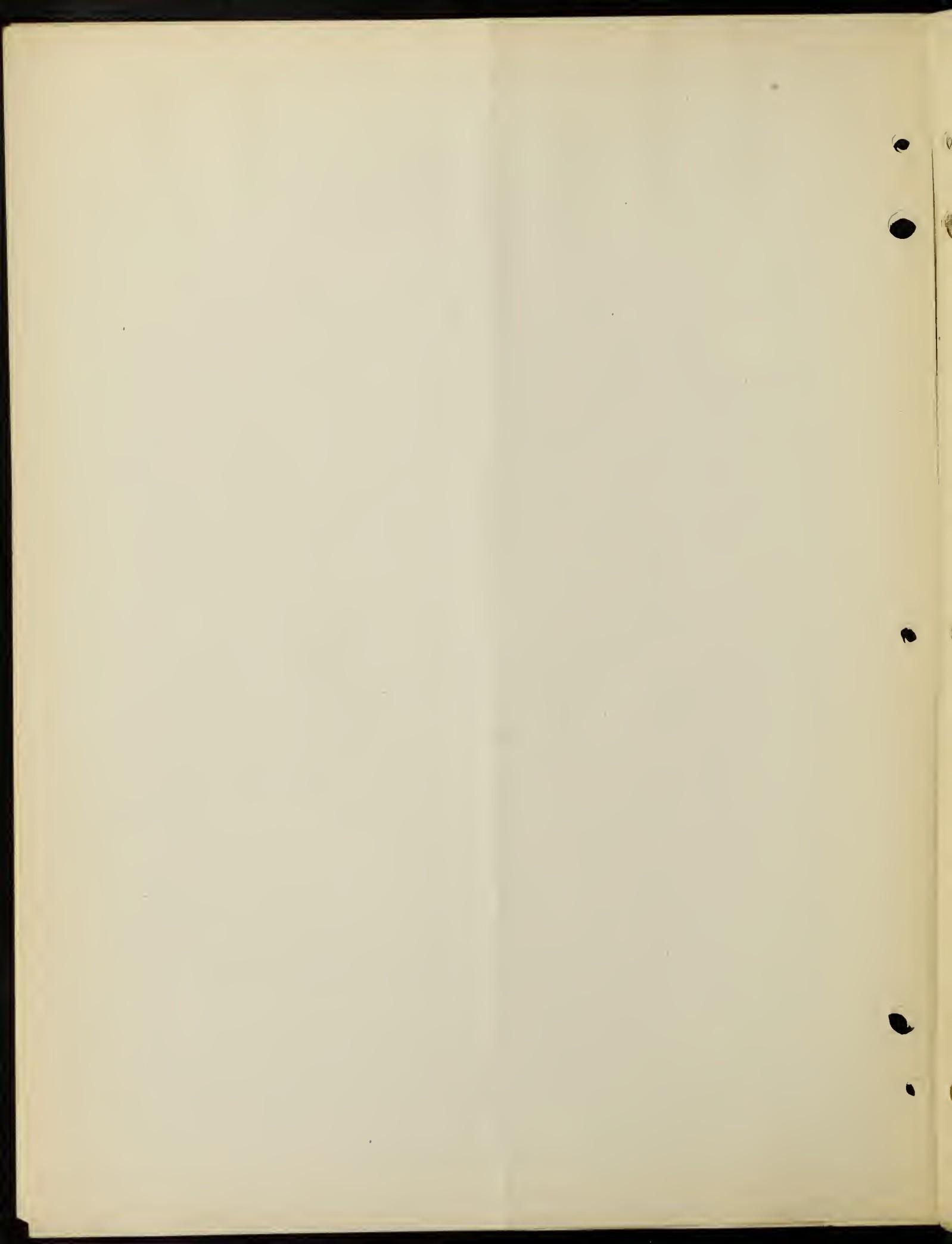
The history of the early schools, however, is a story of experimental arrangements, fluctuating progress, and fragmentary, unrelated local regulations, a state of affairs that was but natural when it is remembered that the settlers inherited little or no knowledge of any public school system or organic educational policy, least of all of schools or instruction adapted to the needs of a new country. It was more a problem of creation than of adaptation that confronted the infant communities, and the development of education showed all the characteristics that would be expected under such circumstances.

Furthermore, in any study of early conditions the investigator must not lose sight of the fact that there were

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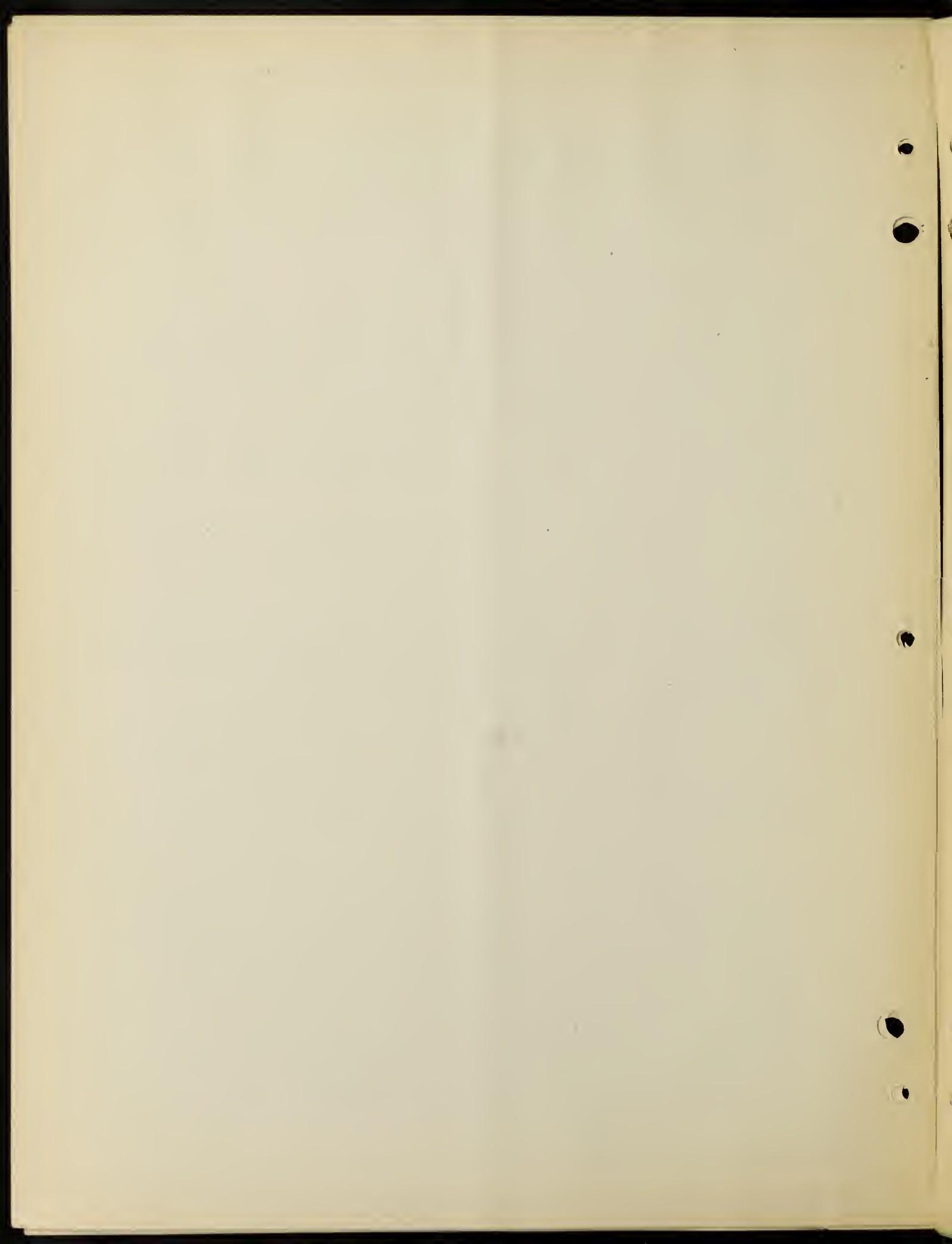


no common laws nor central control in the early colonies, that the scattered settlements were poor and that the strenuous struggle with wilderness, climate, and enemies militated against scholastic pursuits,--which were of relatively minor value for the life of the colonists. Running through town records and colonial and state legislation, moreover, can be traced, even from the beginning, evidences of the reluctance of men to provide adequately for needed public expenses, a trait of human nature that is both universal and perennial.

These general conditions, together with many incidental or local influences, must be borne in mind as affecting--usually unfavorably--the growth of public education, and as explaining the local or temporary stagnation, or retrogression of school control and support.

On the other hand there are numerous instances of most enlightened and advanced public action that proved beneficent and far-reaching in their permanent effects.

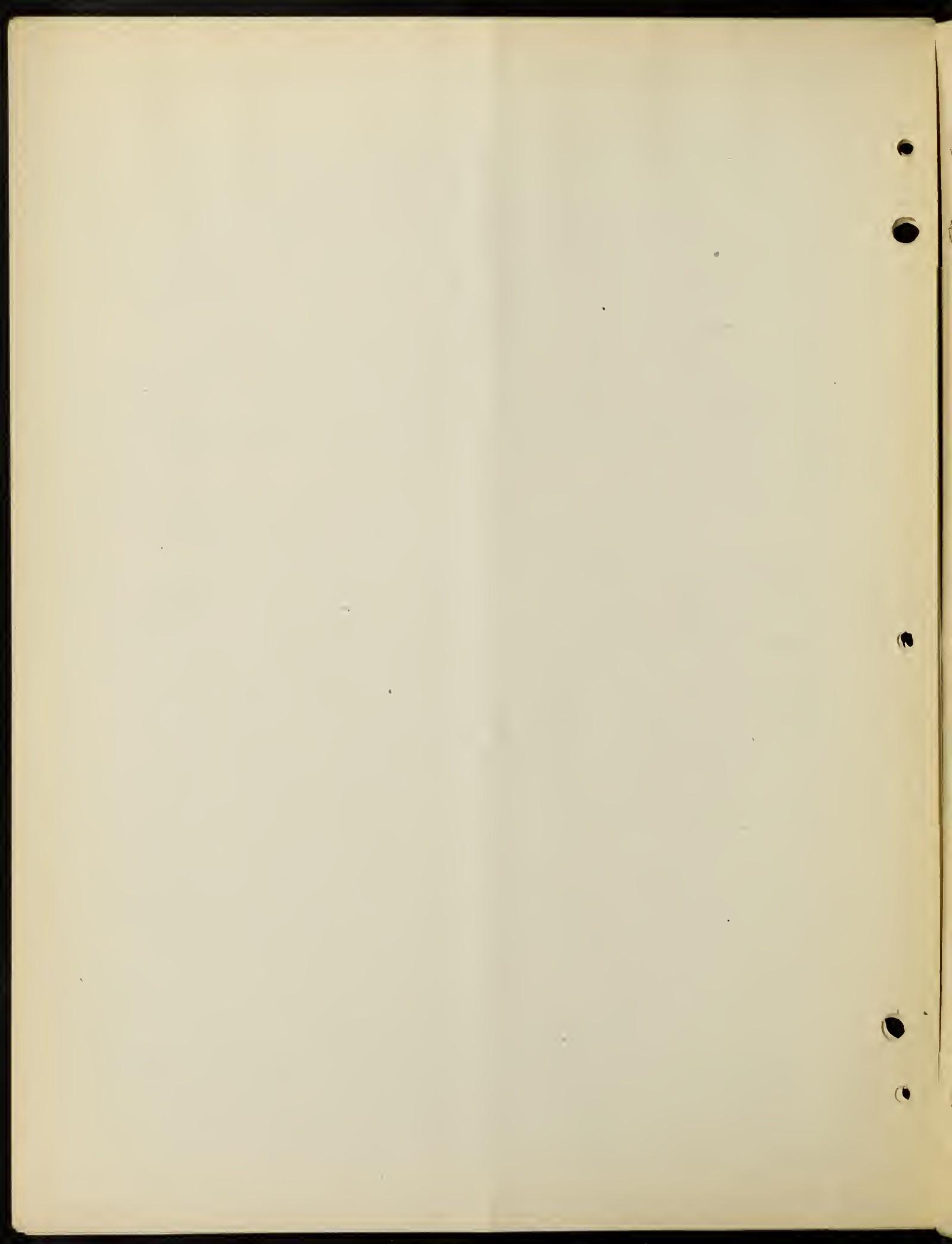
Early legislation, local and state, concerned itself largely with details of financial support, and only to a limited degree with general requirements of administration and curricula. Massachusetts settlements naturally maintained the lead in educational matters and the records of the other New England states reveal much that was borrowed or adapted from the Massachusetts code.



The first schools established at public expense were of grammar or secondary, rather than primary grade, and for boys exclusively. Boston, in 1635, established a public Latin school by vote of the citizens in a town meeting and provided for its support, in part by private donations, in part by rent of certain islands in the harbor, designated by the town for that purpose. A town rate (tax) was also levied when necessary to make up a salary of £50 for the master.

In 1645 a number of Free Schools were organized at Roxbury and Boston, and not long afterward in other towns--Salem, Dorchester, Cambridge, Plymouth and Weymouth. These schools came as a result of widespread neglect of parents and guardians to provide privately for instruction of their children, a neglect that gave rise to a law passed by the General Court of Massachusetts in 1642 decreeing that in every town the selectmen should prosecute those who refused to "train their children in learning and labor," and impose a fine of twenty shillings on those who neglected to teach their children "so much learning as may enable them perfectly to read the English tongue." (This perfection has not yet been attained).

Of interest, too, with reference to the value placed upon education and to the principle of taxation therefor, is an act passed by the Commissioners of the United Colonies (of New England) at Hartford, September, 1644.



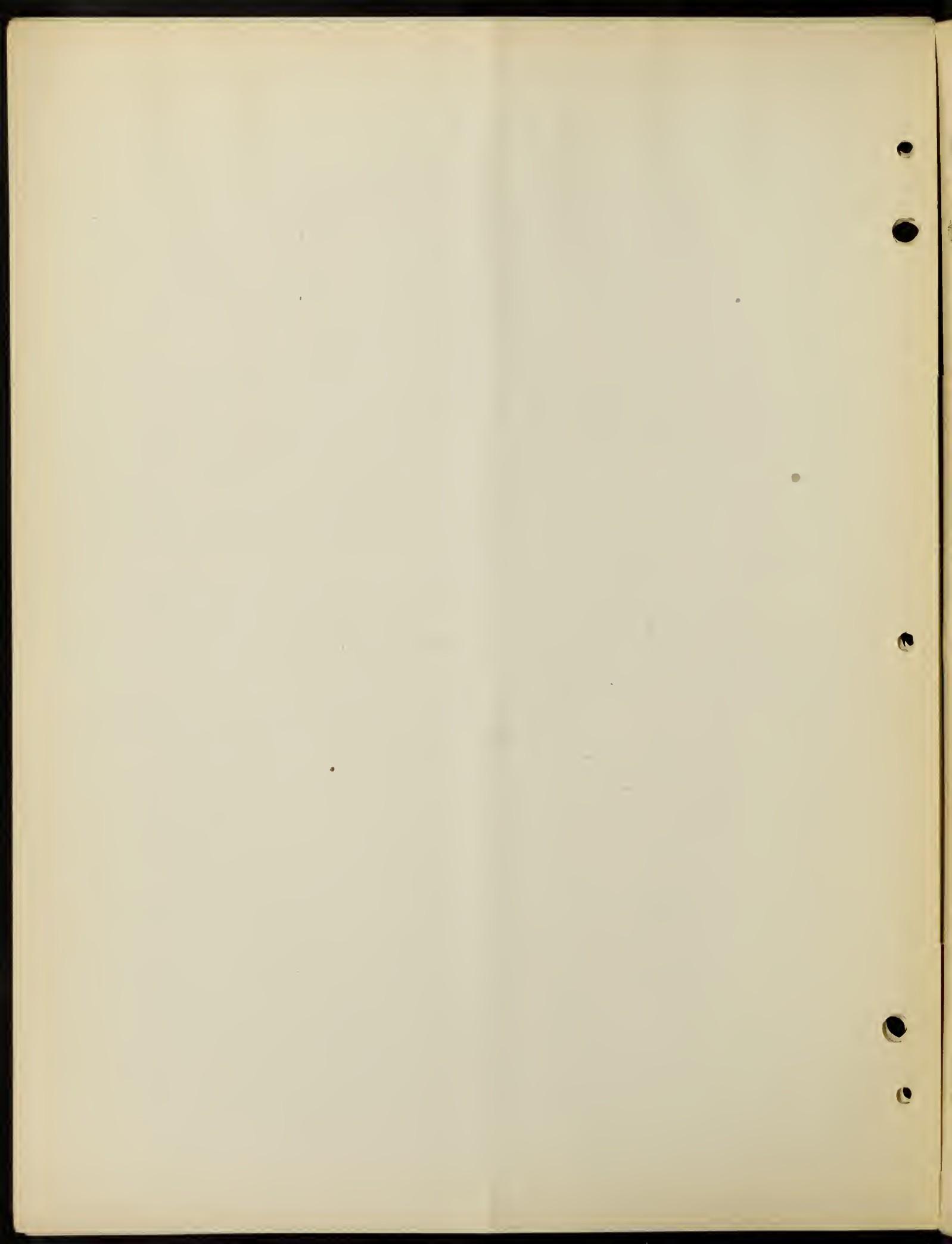
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'Recommended.....that for some way of comfortable mayntenance for that Scho le of the Phrophets that now is (Harvard).....it is commenied to the freedome of every family throughout the plantacions to give yearly but the fourth part of a bushell of corne, or somethinge equivalent thereunto."

The voluntary tax suggested by the phrase "freedome of every family" was the form universally employed at first, but supplanted soon by compulsory taxes sufficient for part of the expenses, the residue being made up by tuition charges, state or town appropriations from the general treasury, land rentals and voluntary contributions.

Compulsory maintenance of schools dates from 1647 when the Massachusetts General Court passed the most celebrated of the early educational laws of the colonies.

"To the end that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers,.....it is ordered that every township within this jurisdiction .....of the number of fifty householders shall appoint one within their town to teach all such children as shall resort to him to write and read, whose wages shall be paid either by the parents or masters of such children, or by the inhabitants in general.....It is further ordered that any town of one hundred.....householders shall set up a grammar (college preparatory) school, the master thereof



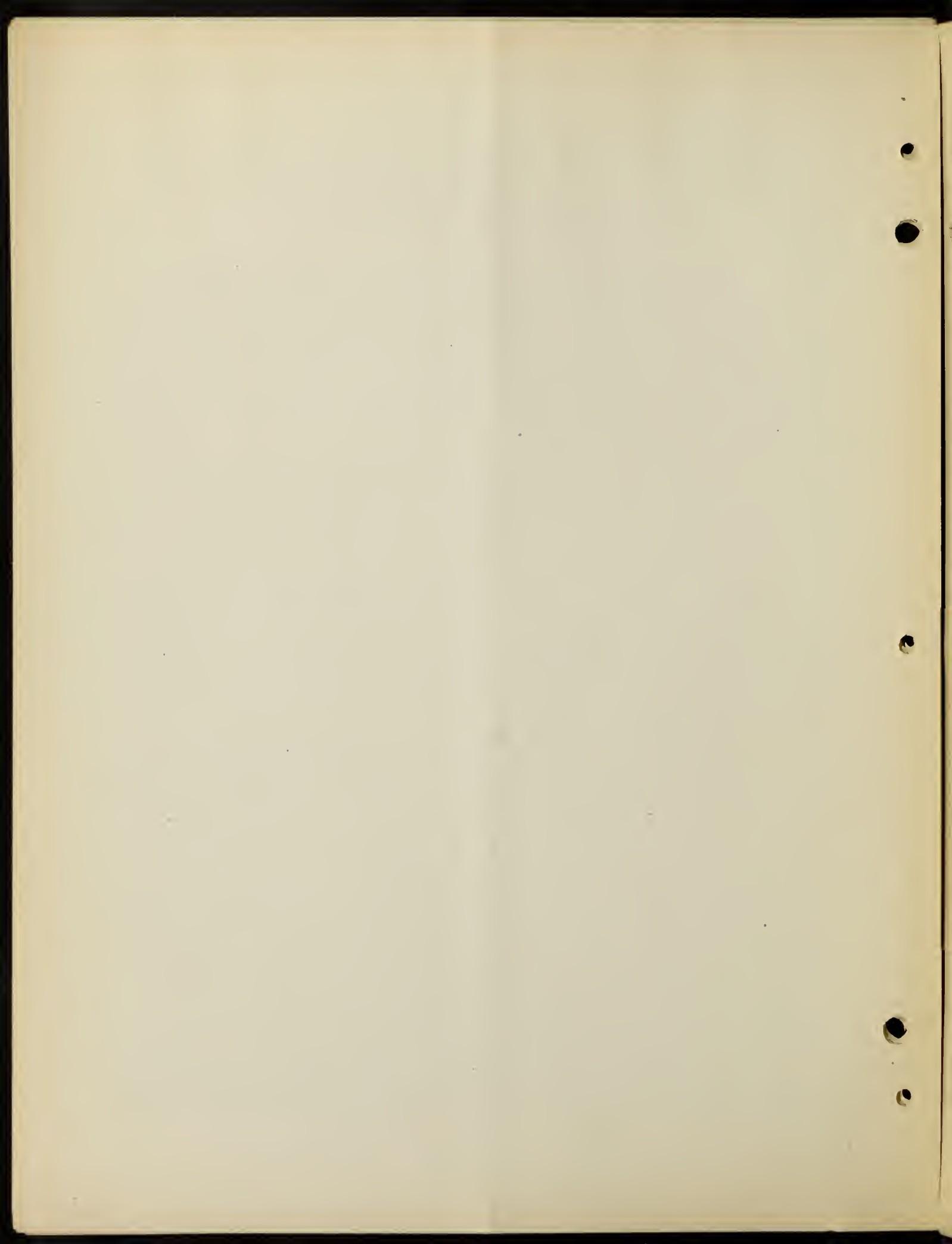
being able to instruct youths so far as they may be fitted for the university."

This legislation applied naturally to New Hampshire territory--being part of Massachusetts until 1680--, and the town records of Hampton, 1649, record an agreement with John Legat to teach children at £20 per year, both sexes to be admitted on equal footing.

In 1695 a legislative enactment was passed "for the builling and repairing of schoolhouses, and allowing a salary to a school-master of each town of this provice. The selectmen....shall raise money by an equal rate and assessment upon the inhabitants, etc." In 1719, a law was enacted similar to the Massachusetts statute of 1647, with a penalty of £20 for non-observance.

Connecticut followed the lead of Massachusetts in 1650 by an act specifying "that every township of fifty householders should provide a teacher for the children, and that towns of one hundred householders should provide a grammar school to fit persons for the University." It also directed the selectmen of every town to see to it that "no families should suffer so much barbarism as not to have their children and apprentices taught to read and write.

As might have been expected, these laws were very commonly ignored, so much so that legislation involving heavier

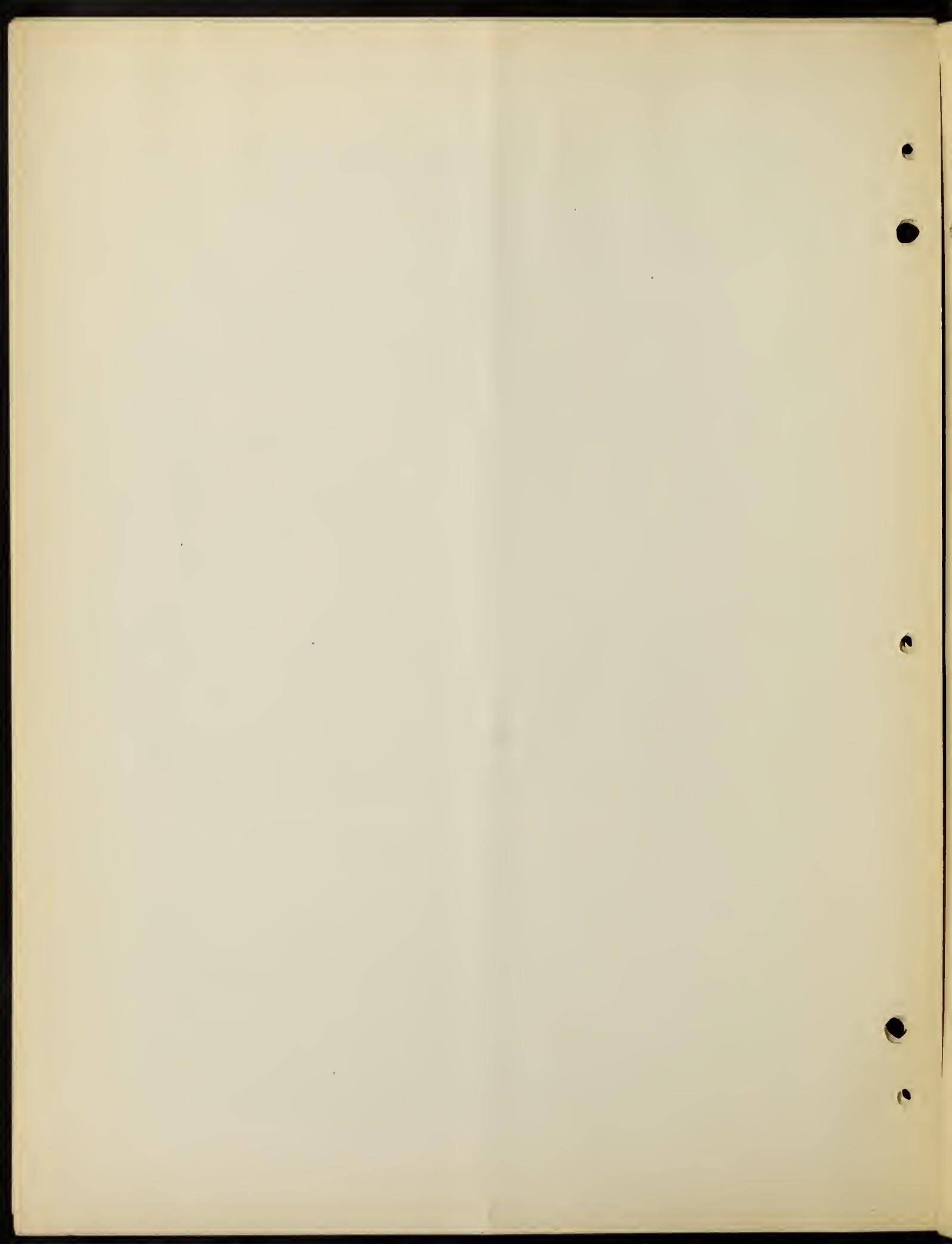


penalties for their non-observance became necessary. Thus in the records of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay for May 31, 1671, we find the following law:-

"Whereas, the law requires every towne, consisting of one hundred familjes or upward, to sett up a grammer schoole and appointe a master thereof, able to instruct youth so as to fitt them for the collegc, and upon neglect thereof, the said towne is to pay five pounds £. annum to the next Lattin schoole untill they shall per- forme that order, the Court, upon weighty rea- sons, judge meete to declare and order, that every towne of one hundred familjes and upwards that shall neglect or omitt to keepe a grammer schoole, as is prouided in that lawe, such towne shall pay tenn pounds £. annum unto the next towne schoole that is sett according to that Lawe."

The law was further amplified by the General Court at Boston in an act passed October 10th, 1683.

"As an addition to the law, title Schooles, this Court doth order and enact that every towne consisting of more than five hundred familjes or householders shall set up and mainteyne two gram- mar schools and two wrighting schools, the mas-

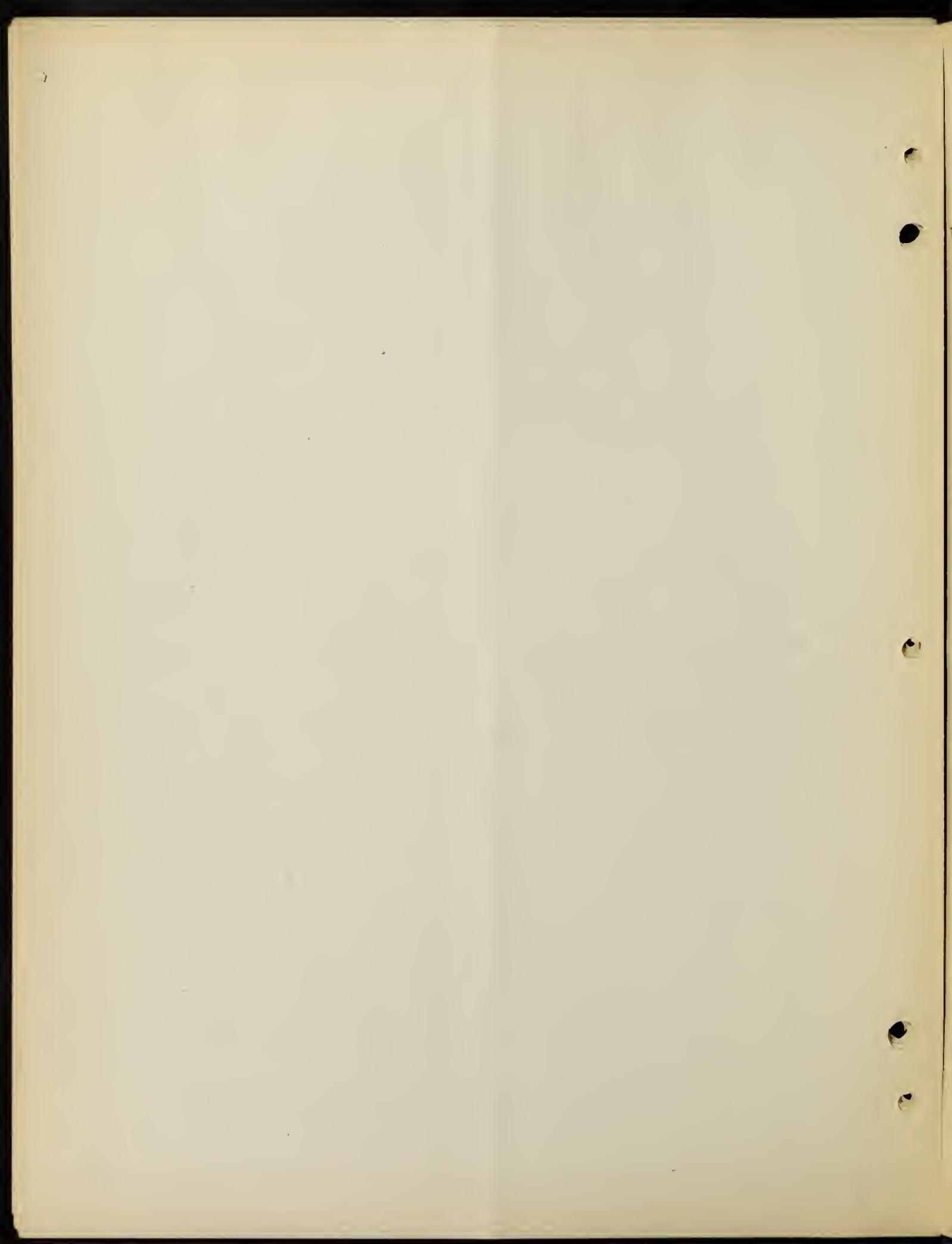


ters whereof shall be fitt and able to instruct youth as said law directs; and whereas the sajd law makes the penalty for such townes as provide not schooles as the law directs to pay the next schoole ten pounds, this Court hereby enacts that the penalty shall be twenty pounds where there are two hundred familjes or householders."

Connecticut also found fines necessary to overcome evasion of the law, and like Massachusetts that the fines must not be so small as to make evasion profitable for the town. In 1677 an ordinance was passed providing that every town which neglected to keen a school above three months in the year, should forfeit five pounds for every defect.....and that every county town which neglected to keep a Latin school should forfeit ten pounds. Penalties were increased from time to time until in 1718 they were from £30 to £40. Support of schools was partly by Rate (tax) and partly by voluntary contributions until 1768.

It will be seen from the foregoing that prior to 1700 several fundamental principles were well established in theory, even though their application was imperfect. They were,--

1. Obligation of parents and guardians to fur-



nish primary education to their children.

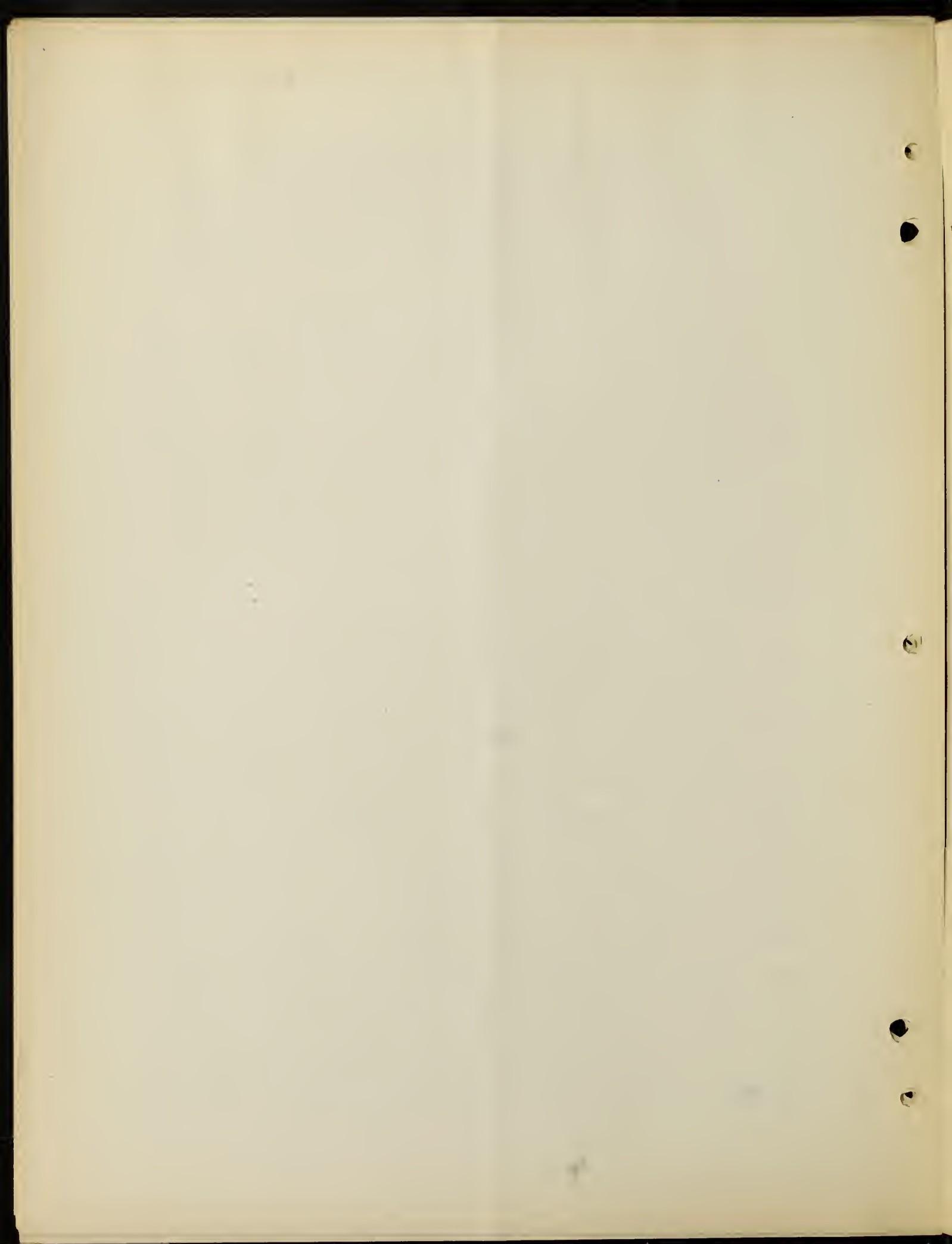
2. Obligation of towns to maintain public schools.

3. Taxation and appropriation of public funds for support of schools.

4. Right of the state to fine offenders.

For obvious reasons laws for compulsory schools and schooling could not be applied to small hamlets and out-lying families, and the character and efficiency of schools in general were very diverse and defective, being determined to a large extent by the genius and ability of the particular teacher employed. Thoroughly well organized school systems, indeed, date from about 1840.

School fees were commonly charged and continued long. These were supplemented by town or state rates which were gradually increased until they came to be the main reliance. In Massachusetts most of the grammar schools charged no tuition fee after the middle of the seventeenth century. In Connecticut in 1717 a uniform school tax throughout the colony was fixed at forty shillings on every thousand pounds (\$.002). Deficiencies were to be made up, half by the town, half by the parents or masters of children attending the school, "unless any town should make other arrangements." Constables were to collect the tax and pay it into the county treasury. This rate remained constant until 1754, when it was reduced, but it was again



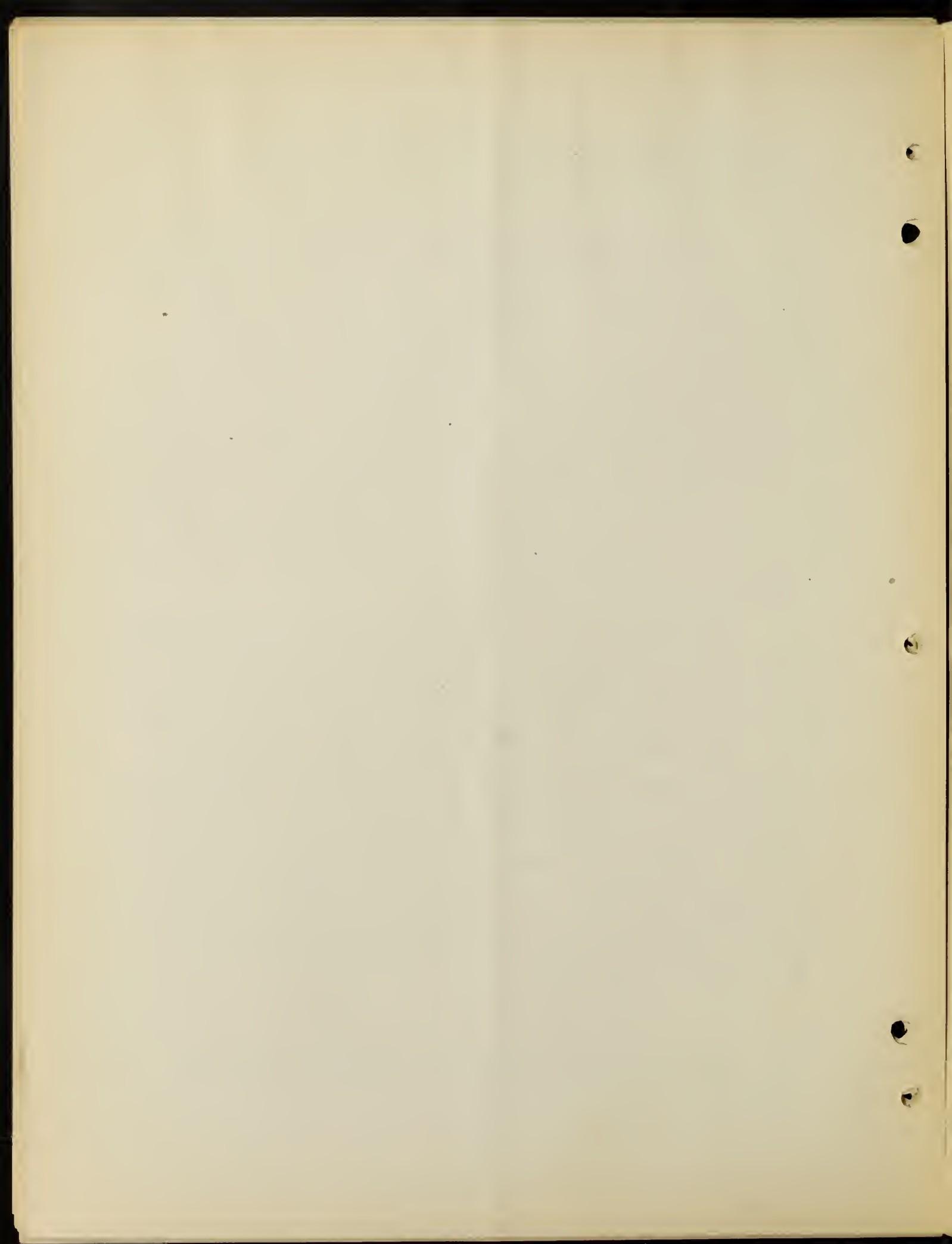
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restored to \$100 in 1767.

In Rhode Island the records of Newport show that on August 20, 1640, a little over a year after its settlement, the freemen voted to call Rev. Robert Lenthal to keep a public school, and made him and his heirs a grant of 100 acres of land, and the use of an additional 100 acres so long as he continued to teach the school. Bristol voted in 1682 that "each person that hath children in town ready to go to school shall pay 3 pence the week for each child's schooling to a school master, and the town shall make the wages amount to 24 pounds the year."

Providence voted, December 2nd, 1767, to build three school houses for small children and one for youth, to provide instruction and to pay the expense from the treasury. The development of common schools was similar in general to that of Massachusetts. Providence, Newport and Bristol led in progress that was somewhat slow, while the rest of the state was characterized more by neglect than by support of schools. Not until the end of the century is there any significant progress recorded, reference to which will be made later.

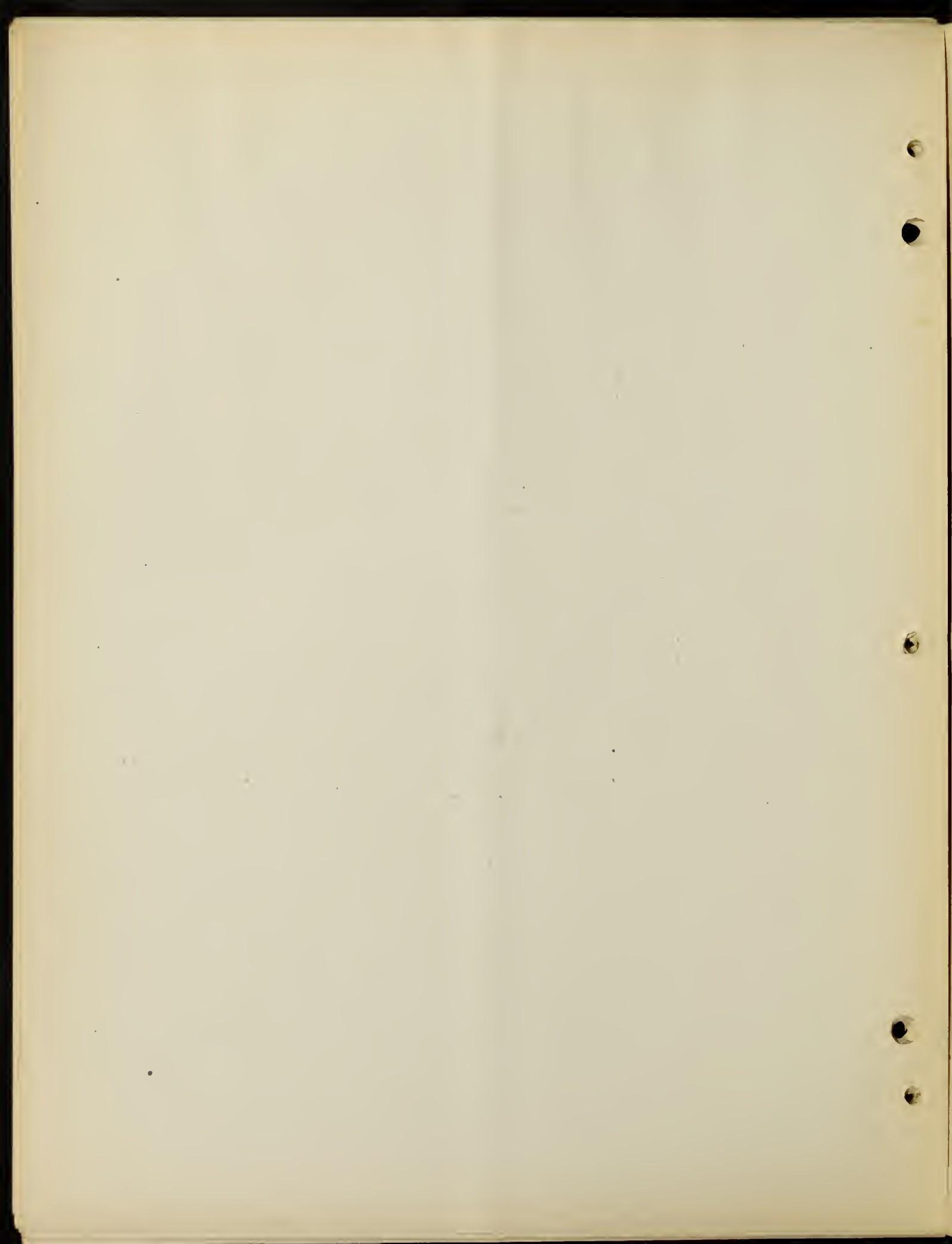
The settlement of Maine and Vermont, beyond mere



outposts of civilization--the cabins of the hardy frontiersmen--, is of much later date than the rest of New England, so it is not surprising that in Maine the first recorded votes and appropriations for the support of schools are found in town records of the first quarter of the 18th century. The schools were as a rule of the crudest character, kept in log houses of primitive construction and equipment.

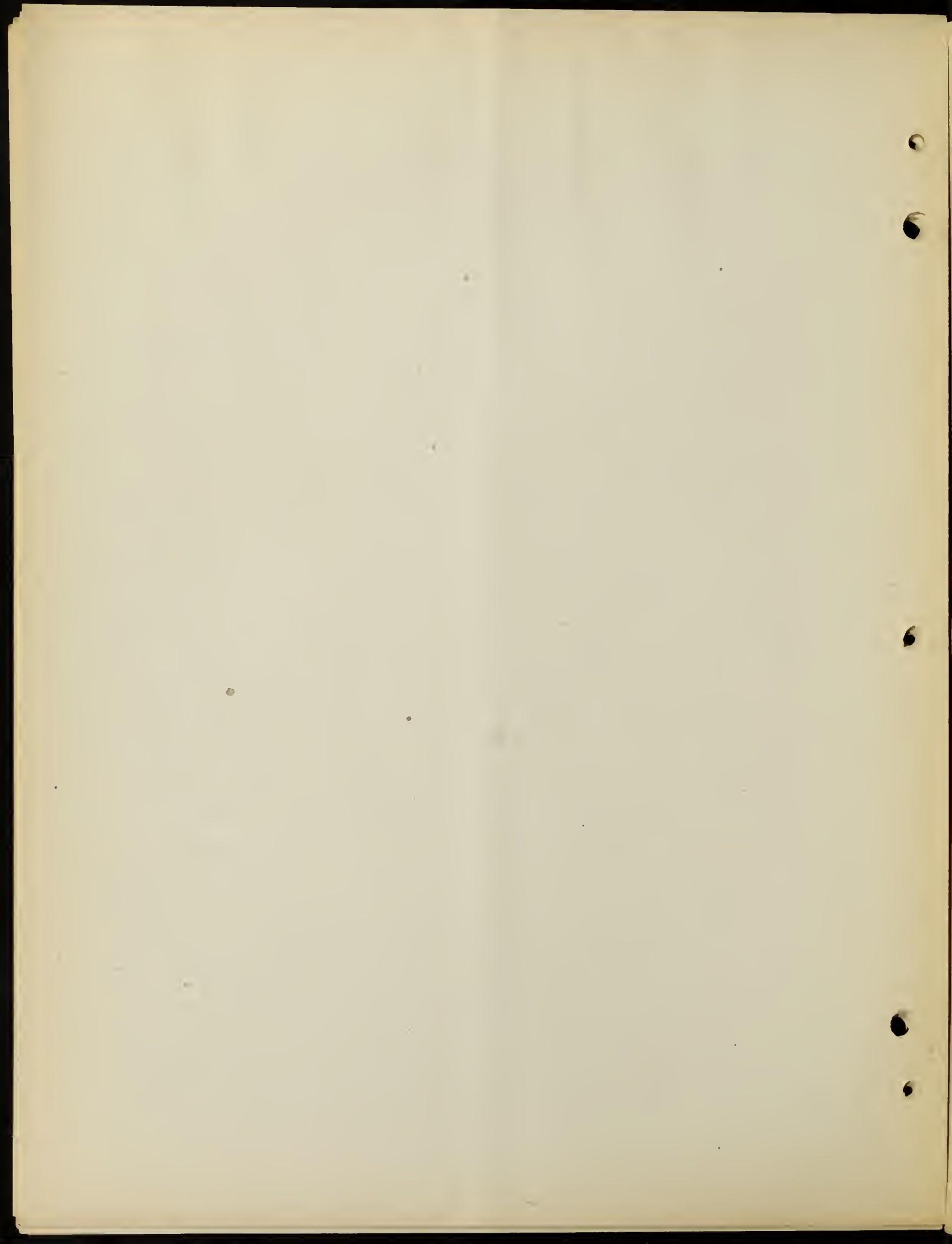
Vermont was even later in establishing public schools--just prior to the Revolution. Guilford, founded in 1761, voted the same year 500 acre lots (to afford income by rental) and a village lot for the use of schools. Bennington followed in April, 1765, by taxing itself for 3 schools. Woodstock voted in 1777 to sustain five schools in five districts, and in 1782 voted to raise a school tax of 2 pence on the pound. Tompkins in 1781, "sequestered twenty one pound out of the hundred bushels of wheat for schooling" to be divided "among each district." The first direct legislation by the state was an Act of October, 1782, empowering towns to divide their territory into districts and to designate trustees in each district, who with selectmen should manage lands and moneys belonging to the schools. One half of money needed was to be raised by tax and the other half might also be raised by tax or by voluntary subscription.

This district system has come to be the practically



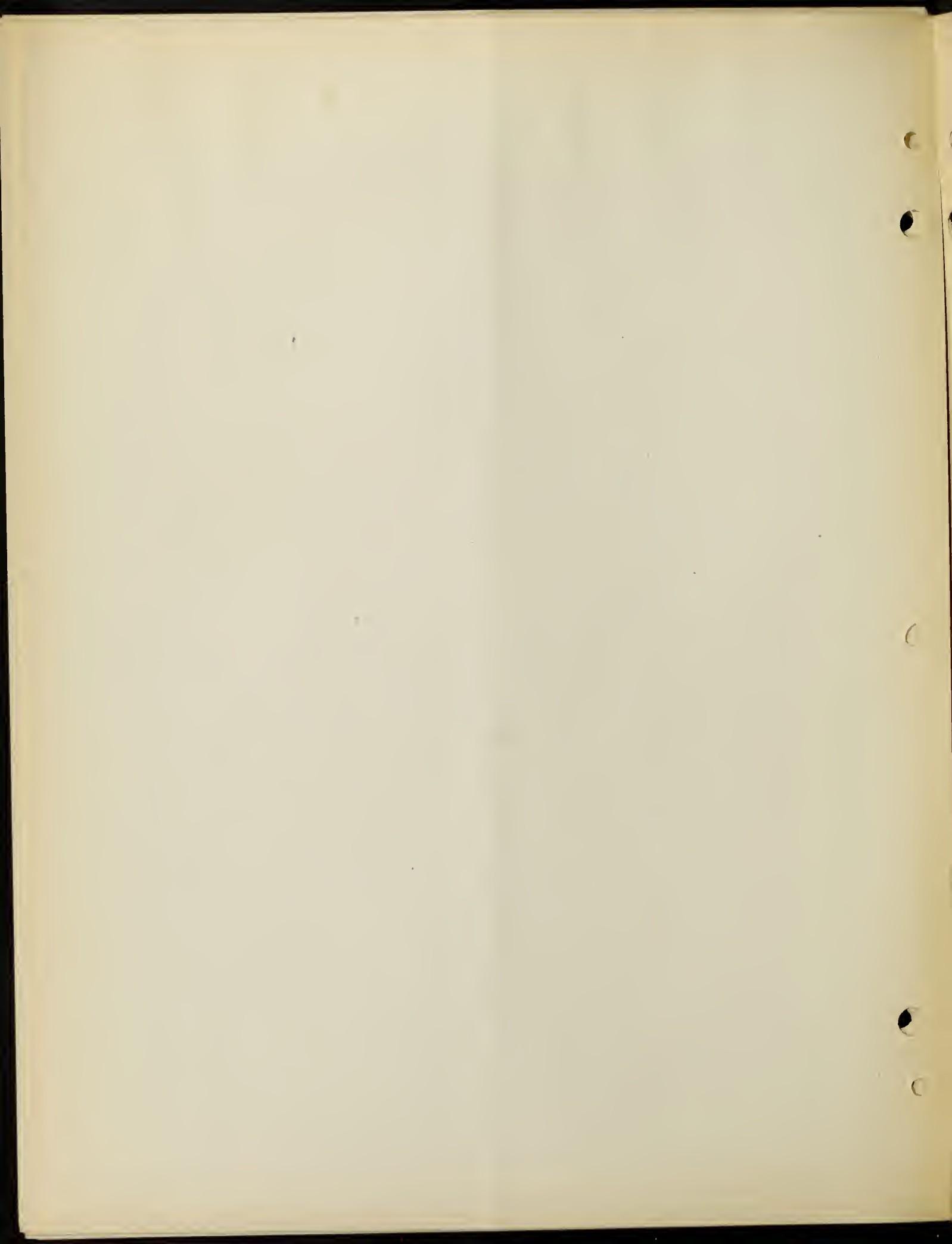
universal form of school administration in New England in the eighteenth century. Towns gave up their control of schools save as they voted to form themselves into districts for school purposes with the schoolhouse (or room) near the center of population. The district had its own committee that provided for a winter term of three or four months and sometimes for a summer term. The committee had full power to regulate its own school in every particular, with the result that the greatest diversity of conditions existed. The school district system was introduced in Connecticut in 1701. The seal of legislation was placed upon the system in 1712 when parishes were legally substituted in place of the town for administration of school affairs. In 1775 there were 190 parishes "in the capacity of school societies" in 73 towns.

Rhode Island adopted the district system about 1750, Massachusetts in 1789, New Hampshire about 1805, and Maine at the time of its organization as a state in 1820. Generally the district system was a constant source of trouble and dissatisfaction, characterized by local inefficiency and apathy. At best it must be regarded as a makeshift growing out of inefficient state and town management of education in thinly settled regions. "The law of 1789 (Mass.) authorizing towns to divide themselves into districts," said Horace Mann in his 10th Annual Report (P.37), "was the most unfortunate law, on the subject of Common Schools, ever en-



acted in the State." Further reference to it will be made in connection with its abolition in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

At the time of the Revolution we find that public schools were pretty thoroughly established throughout New England, elementary in the type of instruction, with compulsory Latin (grammar) schools in the largest towns. Expenditures were meager, and were met almost universally by tax, land rental, appropriations (usually for deficiencies) from the general treasury, fees for tuition and voluntary contributions. There was little or no state aid, except in Connecticut, nothing in the way of systematic organization or standardization of work, each district being a law unto itself. The lead of Massachusetts and Connecticut in legislation and methods of support was followed by the other colonies, roughly in the order of their settlement. Little provision was made for the education of girls, and evasion of laws relative to instruction were easy and common, both by towns or districts and by parents. It was not until independence had transferred authority and responsibility from the King of England and his subordinates to the citizens themselves, and not until the era of settlement, colonization and war had given place to the steady pursuits of peace that the period of establishment of schools gave place to the period of development.



## Chapter 11.

### From the Revolution to 1850.

A well-defined period in public school administration extends from the end of the eighteenth century to the time when Horace Mann in Massachusetts (1837-1850), and Henry Barnard in Connecticut (1839-1845; 1849-1855) and Rhode Island (1845-1849) performed their monumental work of reconstruction.

During this half-century, the district system continued to be the prevailing type of organization; nor was there any general authority capable of overcoming serious and varied local faults, of standardizing courses of instruction, of furnishing expert advice and guidance and of enforcing reasonable requirements. Each community was largely a law unto itself and conducted its schools very much as it pleased.

This period was distinctly one of administrative and legislative experimentation. Progress was made from time to time by some enlightened community or individual, and such progress led to imitation by other communities. But publicity and comparison, two most valuable spurs to civic ambition, were lacking until the organization of state boards of education and the employment of state or local superintendents. Through these agencies, the evaluation of school work

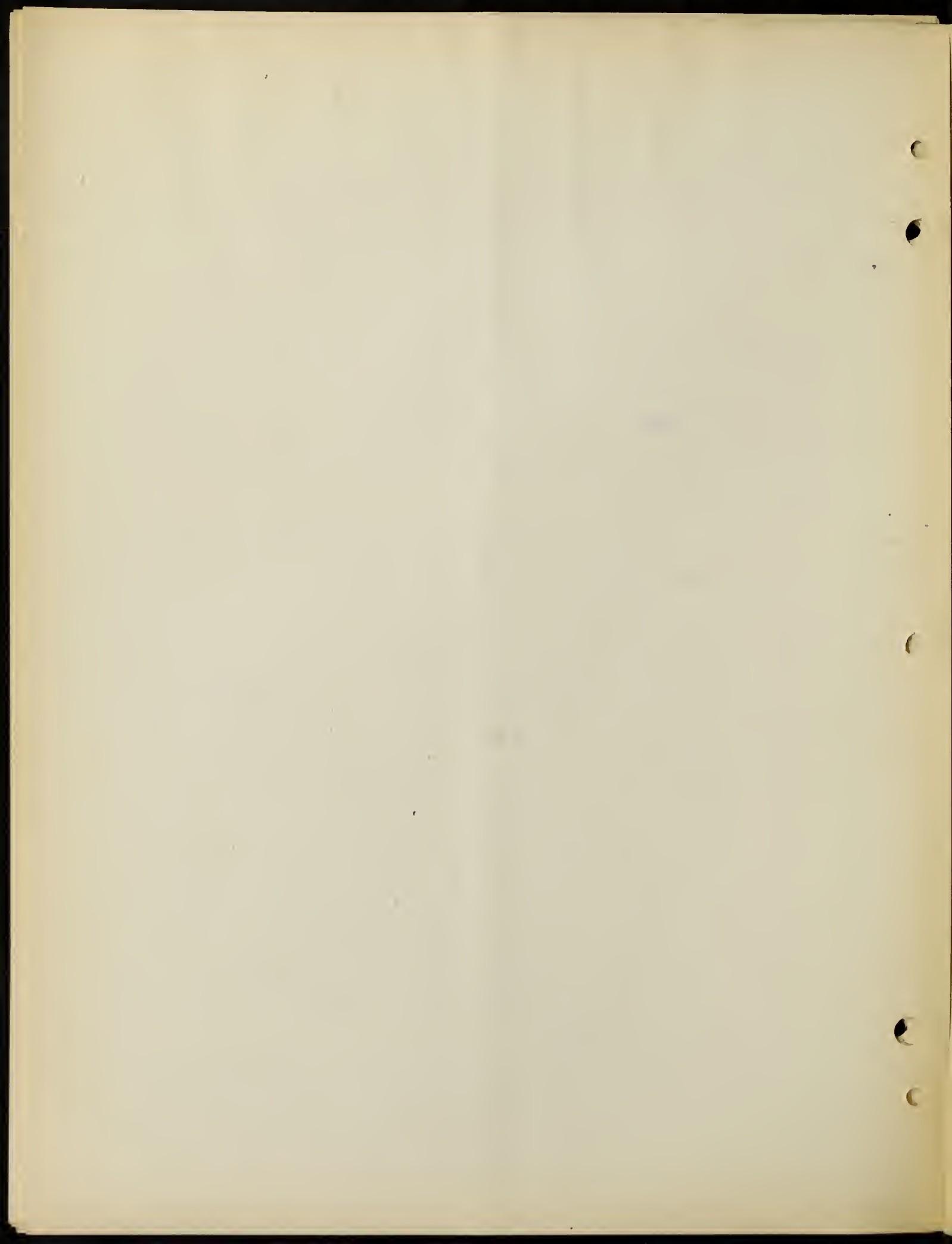
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become possible, and through them state aid could be made dependent upon the fulfilment of definite requirements by local boards, thus insuring profitable state expenditure rather than a virtual donation to the town treasuries.

A most significant step in Massachusetts school finance was the establishment in 1854 of a permanent state school fund. Recommendations to this effect were made to the State Legislature by the Commissioner on Education in January 1828, and again, in January 1835. In this latter report the committee said,--

"It is not intended, in establishing a school fund, to relieve towns and parents from the principal expense of education, but to manifest our interest in, and to give direction, energy, and stability to institutions essential to individual happiness and the public welfare.....Therefore we recommend that a fund be constituted, and the distribution of the income so ordered as to open a direct intercourse with the schools; that their wants may be better understood and supplied, that advantages of education be more highly appreciated, and the blessings of wisdom, virtue, and knowledge, carried home to the fireside of every family, to the bosom of every child ."

This report and recommendation was carefully considered by a

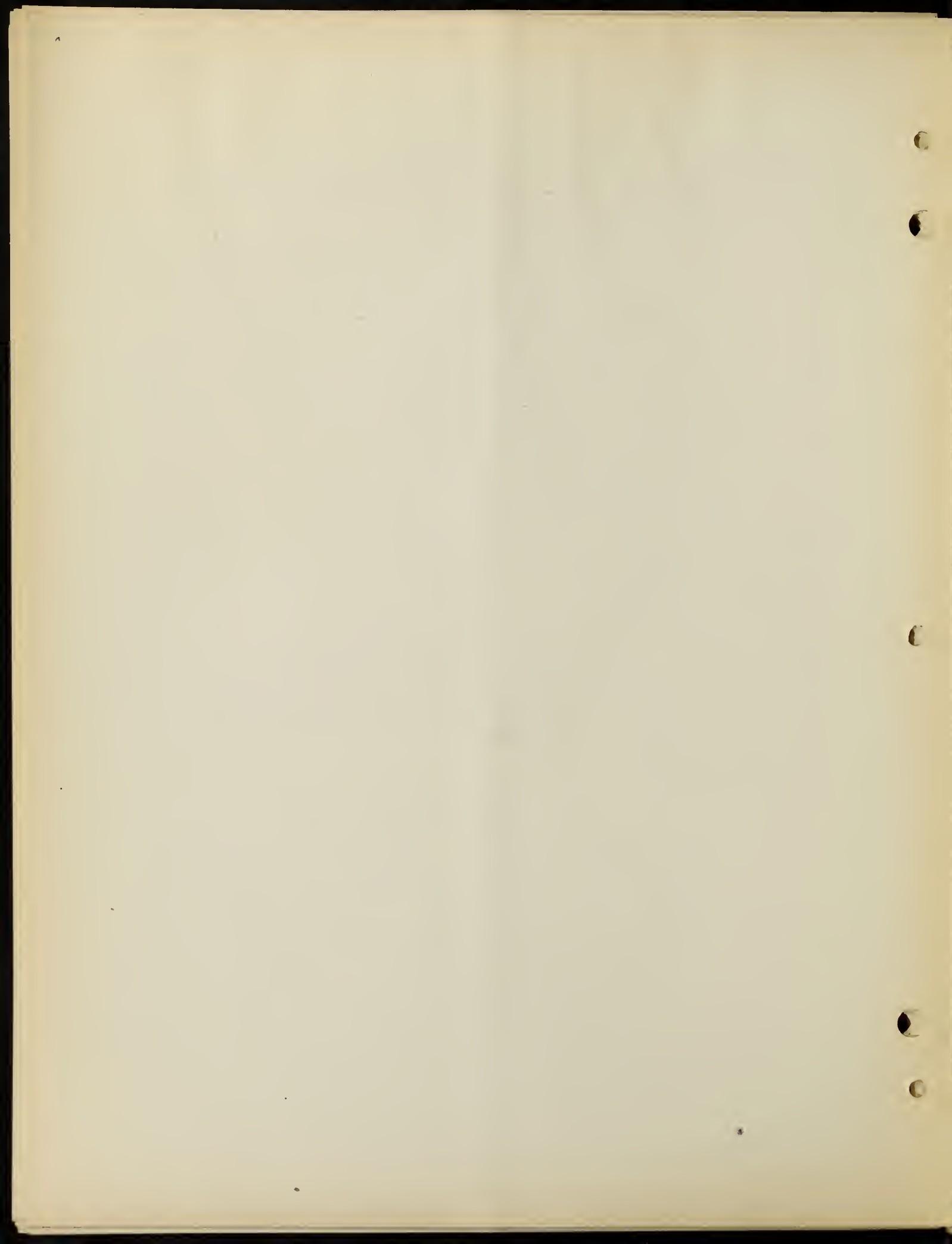


committee, who through their chairman, A. D. Foster reported in February, 1854, a bill entitled "An Act to Establish the Massachusetts School Fund:-"

"That all unappropriated moneys now in the Treasury, derived from the sale of lands in the State of Maine, and from the claim of the State on the United States for military service, be appropriated to constitute a permanent fund for the aid and encouragement of common schools.'

This 'Massachusetts School Fund' went into operation on January 1, 1855. By an act passed in 1854, the fund was increased to \$150,000 by the transfer to the fund of 504 shares of the stock of the Western Railroad Corporation held by the State. Again, from 1859 on, proceeds from the sale of Back Bay lands were added to the fund, bringing the amount up to \$2,000,000 on January 1, 1866, to which sum the fund was limited.

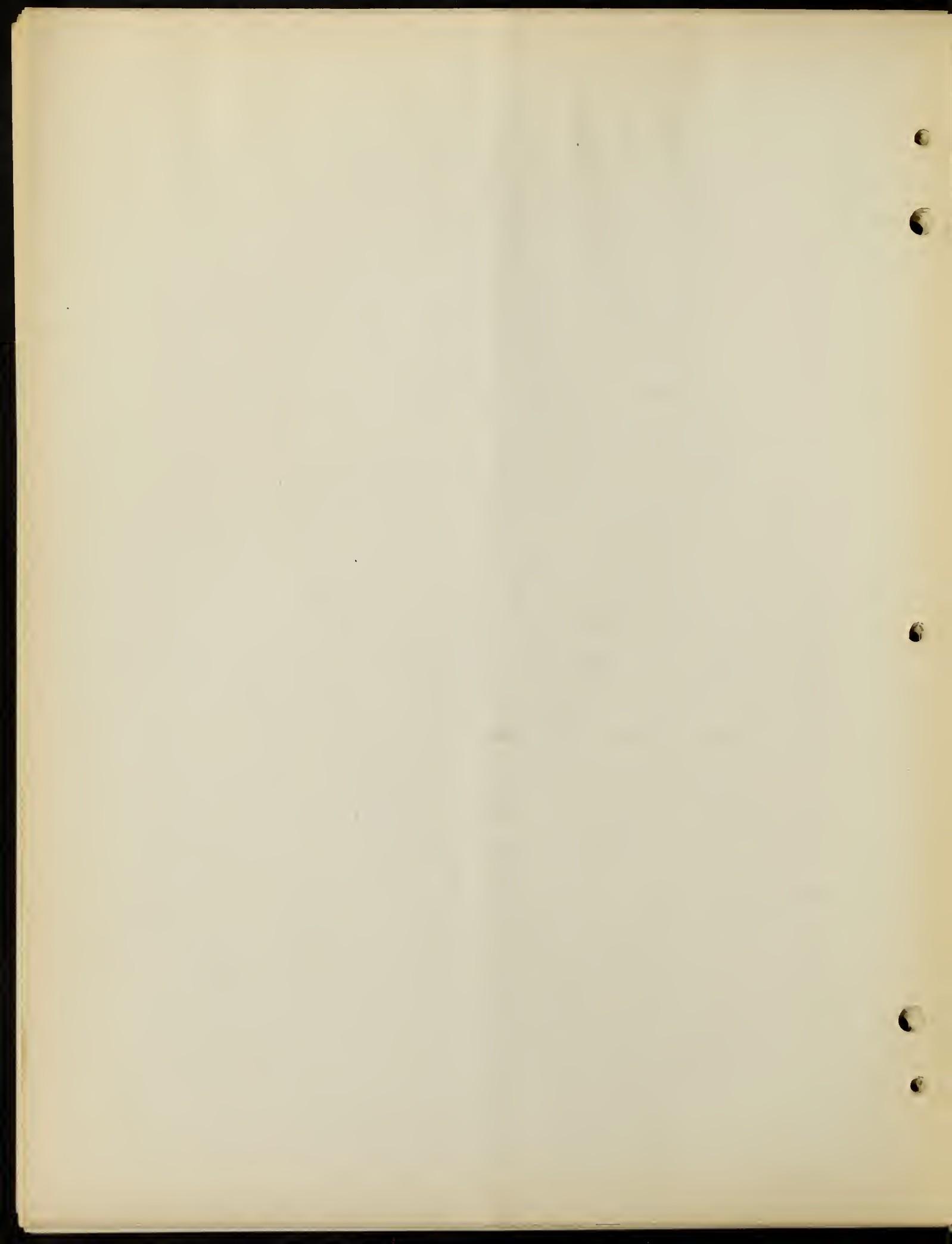
'The establishment of the School Fund', says Governor Boutwell, "was the most important educational measure ever adopted by the government of the Commonwealth; and in connection with the organization of the Board of Education (1857), it has wrought a salutary change and reformation in the character and influence of our public schools.'  
-----"With the fund, it is possible to ob-



tain accurate and complete returns from nearly every town in the State. Without it, all legislation must prove ineffectual. By the aid of the fund all material facts are annually made known to the State; without it each town is ~~very~~ ignorant of what its neighbors are doing. With the fund, we have a system; without it, all is disjointed and disconnected."

One-half of this fund was annually distributed to towns and cities in proportion to the number of children in each between the ages of five and fifteen years, conditioned upon returning certain reports, and raising by taxation not less than \$1.50 (later \$3.00) for each child between five and fifteen. The other half was used for all other educational purposes, such as Normal schools, schools for the blind, deaf and dumb, feeble-minded persons, etc.

The defects prevalent in Massachusetts schools for the remedy of which Gov. Boutwell prophesied so much from this fund, were most admirably summed up in a series of six essays by James G. Carter upon Popular Education, in which he dwells particularly upon Massachusetts schools, and suggests the establishment of an "Institution for the Education of Teachers." Common defects sprung from inefficient management and parsimonious support. Carter sums them up



as follows:-

Lax legislative policy of the State tending to depreciate the character of the free schools.

Looseness and confusion of laws regarding schools.

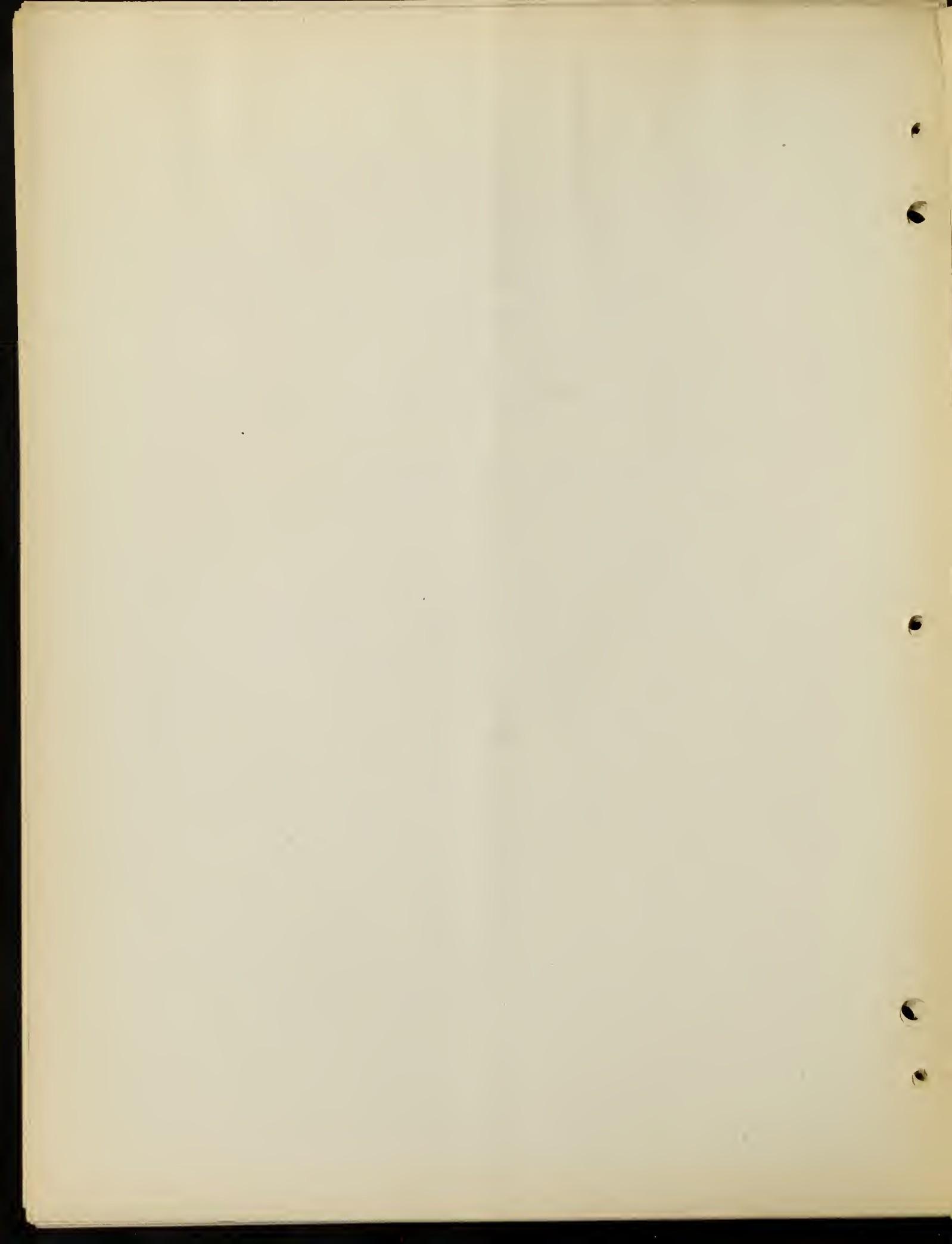
No system of securing reports or returns. (This was, however, required soon after, by an Act of the Legislature in 1826.)

No distinct responsible school committee (prior to 1824).

Incompetent and unfit teachers.

Other glaring defects might be added to Carter's list, but he only mentions those pertinent to his plea for the establishment of a state institution for training teachers, which "should be provided with an appropriate professional library; a Principal and assistant Professors; a training school for prospective teachers; and an enlightened Board of Commissioners." It was in large measure due to Carter's efforts that the most important of the early acts of the first Board of Education was to establish two normal schools in 1839, one in Lexington and one in Barre.

Horace Mann gives in his annual report of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1841 (virtually a resume of existing school conditions in Massachusetts) the first reliable statistics of public and private schools for the year 1839-1840. He found,-----



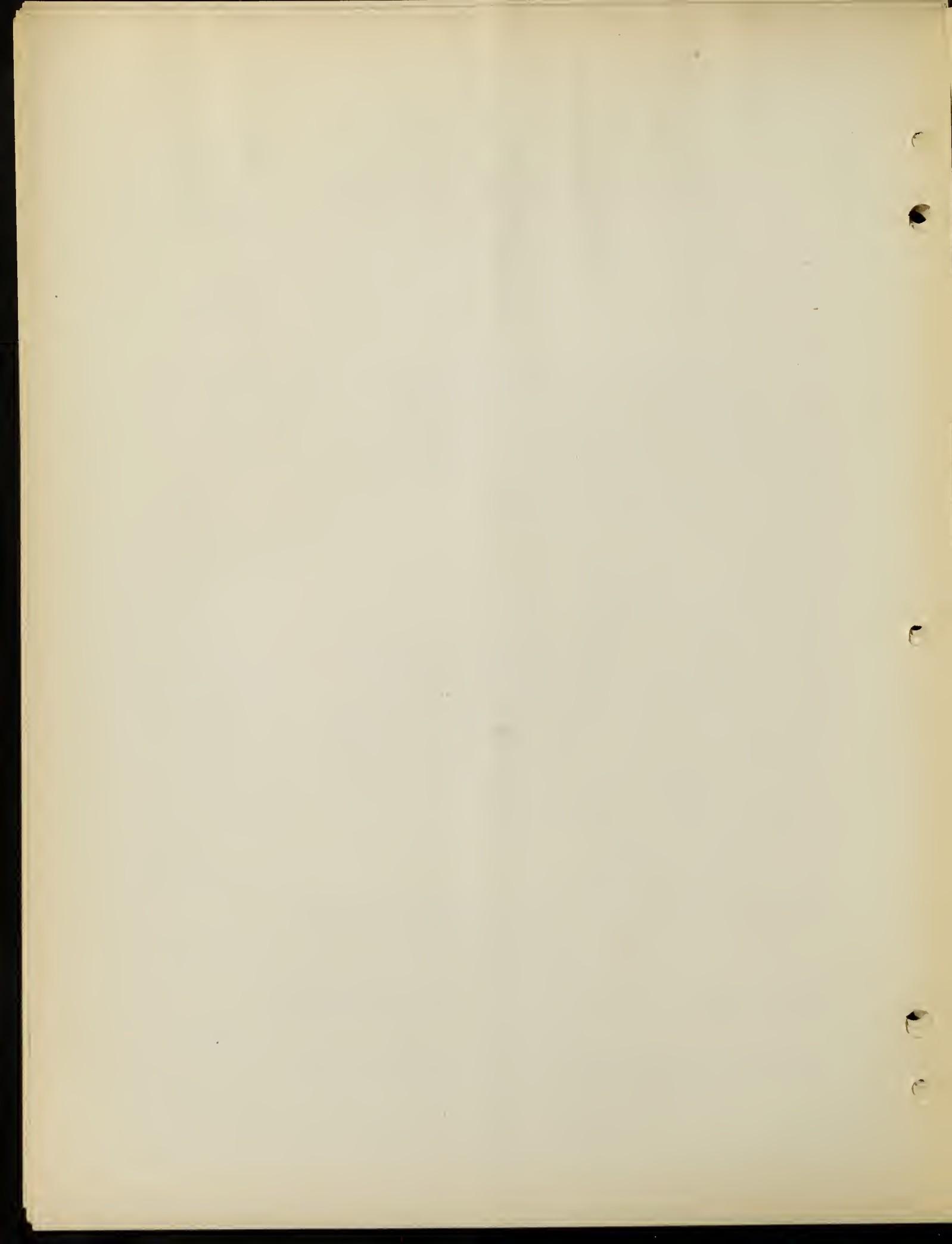
Total public school expenditures	\$474,221.24
Total private school expenditures	241,114.20
Total	\$718,335.44

Total number of school children in  
the state

179,268

Ten years later the report appears much improved in form and with fuller and more valuable statistics from which the following figures are taken (year of 1849).

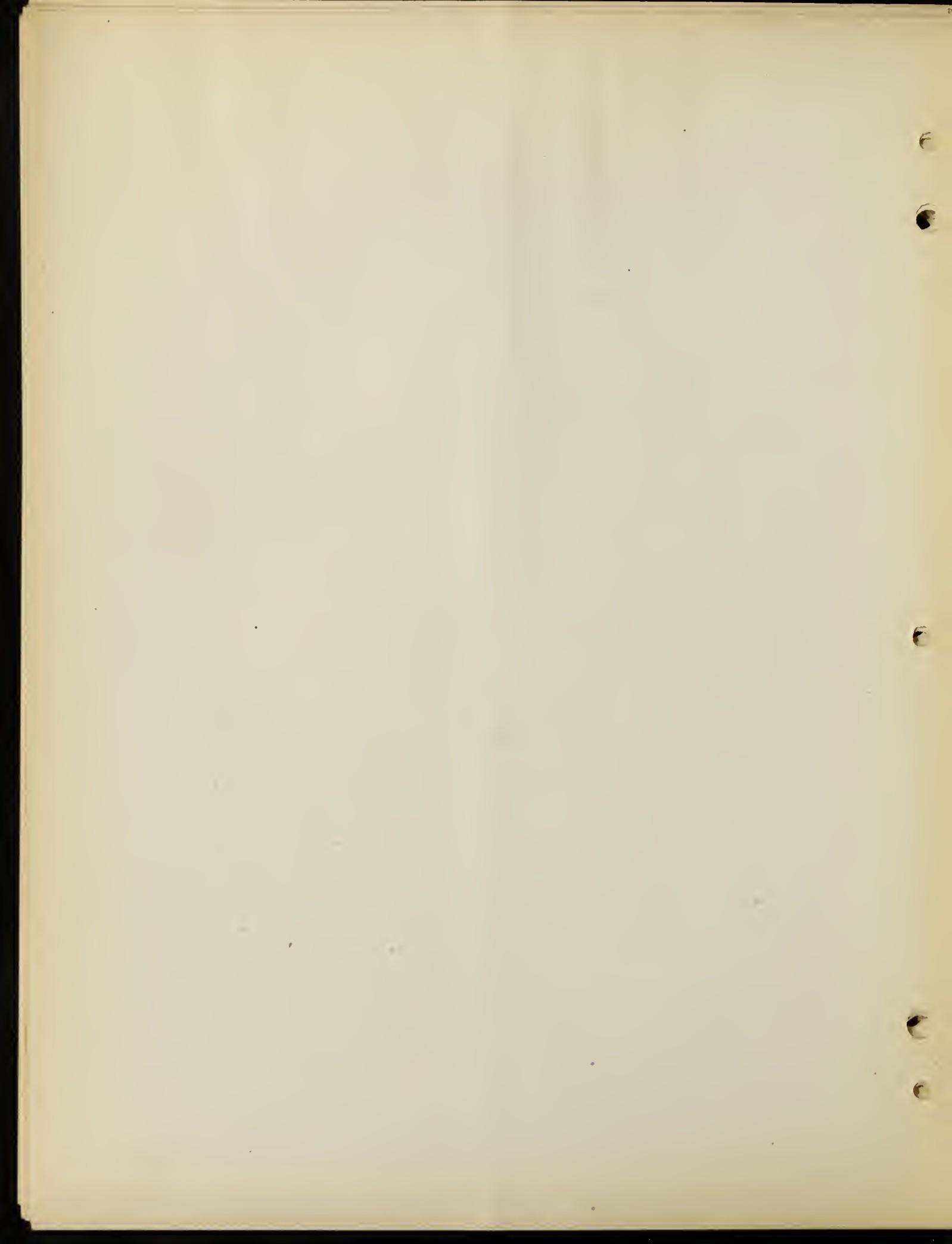
Number of towns making returns	315
Population	715,700
Valuation	\$299,878,329
No. of public schools	3,749
No. of scholars in all schools--in summer	175,659
No. of scholars in all schools--in winter	191,712
Average attendance in all schools--in summer	126,502
Average attendance in all schools--in winter	142,967
Average length of school year	7 mo. 24 da.
No. of male teachers	2,426
No. of female teachers	5,757
Average monthly wages of male teachers includ- ing board	\$54.02
Average monthly wages of female teachers includ- ing board	14.19
Amount of money raised by taxation for support	



of public schools	\$850,577.33
Income of Surplus Revenue (State Fund)	
appropriated to schools	5,483.26

Unlike as these statistical returns appear, it can nevertheless be seen that appreciable progress had been made during the decade in more generous and efficient support of education. The stimulus given to public schools by the work of the Board of Education--especially as affecting financial support,--is well summed up in Horace Mann's exhaustive treatise on the Massachusetts System of Common Schools (Tenth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board of Education, 1846). "Towns of the state are found in large numbers that voluntarily tax themselves in excess of legal requirements (p. 35);.....and for classes of children and subjects of instruction not required by law (p. 36 ff.). ....Superintending or prudential committees have by this time acquired the right (Revised Statutes of 1846, Chapter 23) to bind towns or districts to pay for necessary running expenses in default of appropriations (pp.52-65). ....School taxes are voted, levied and collected in the same manner as other town taxes, paid into the treasurer's office, and by him paid out on order of the superintending or prudential committee."

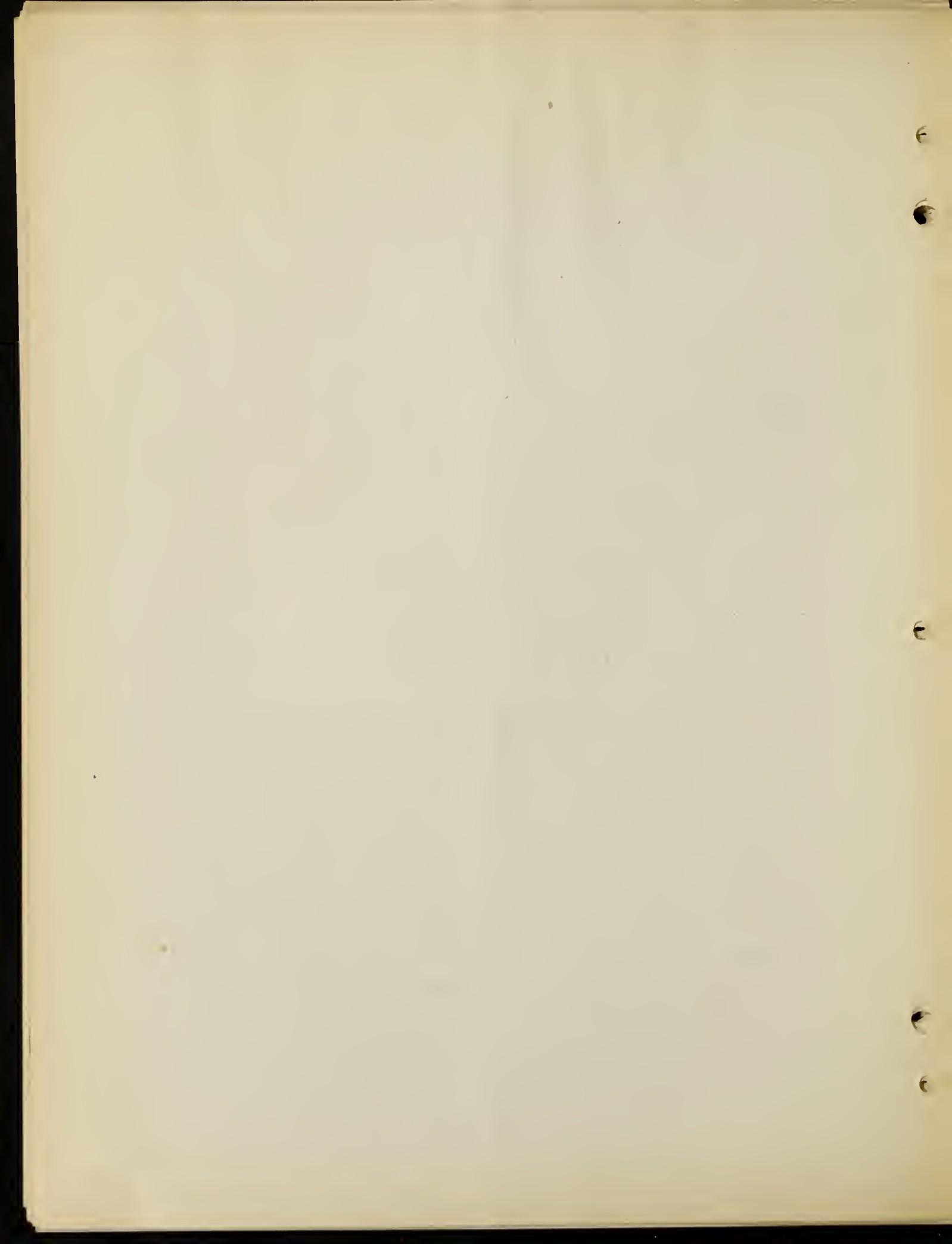
In this report may be seen the foundation of the present system of the support and administration of public schools in Massachusetts.



The chief impetus to the liberal support of public schools in Rhode Island subsequent to the Revolution was given by the Mechanics' Association of Providence, and more particularly by one member, John Howland. Most of these men had but meagre education, and felt their loss keenly. "But," said John Howland, "it will be our fault as well as the fault of our fellow-citizens, if the next generation is not better taught. It is a subject which ought to be the lesson by day and the story of the evening. ....Let it be declared in all places, till it has grown into a proverb; that it is the duty of the legislature to establish free schools throughout the State, ....to provide such a common education as will qualify our children to be respectable, as well as useful members of society."

The agitation led to a memorial presented to the General Assembly in 1798, soliciting "legal provision for the establishment of free schools, sufficient to educate all the children in the several towns throughout the State." The result of this was the adoption in February, 1800, of a comprehensive and enlightened law, the salient features of which were the following:

1. Each and every town should maintain one or more free schools for the instruction of all white inhabitants between the ages of six and



twenty years in reading, writing and common arithmetic.

2. Extent or amount of schooling was fixed by statute, towns being grouped for that purpose.

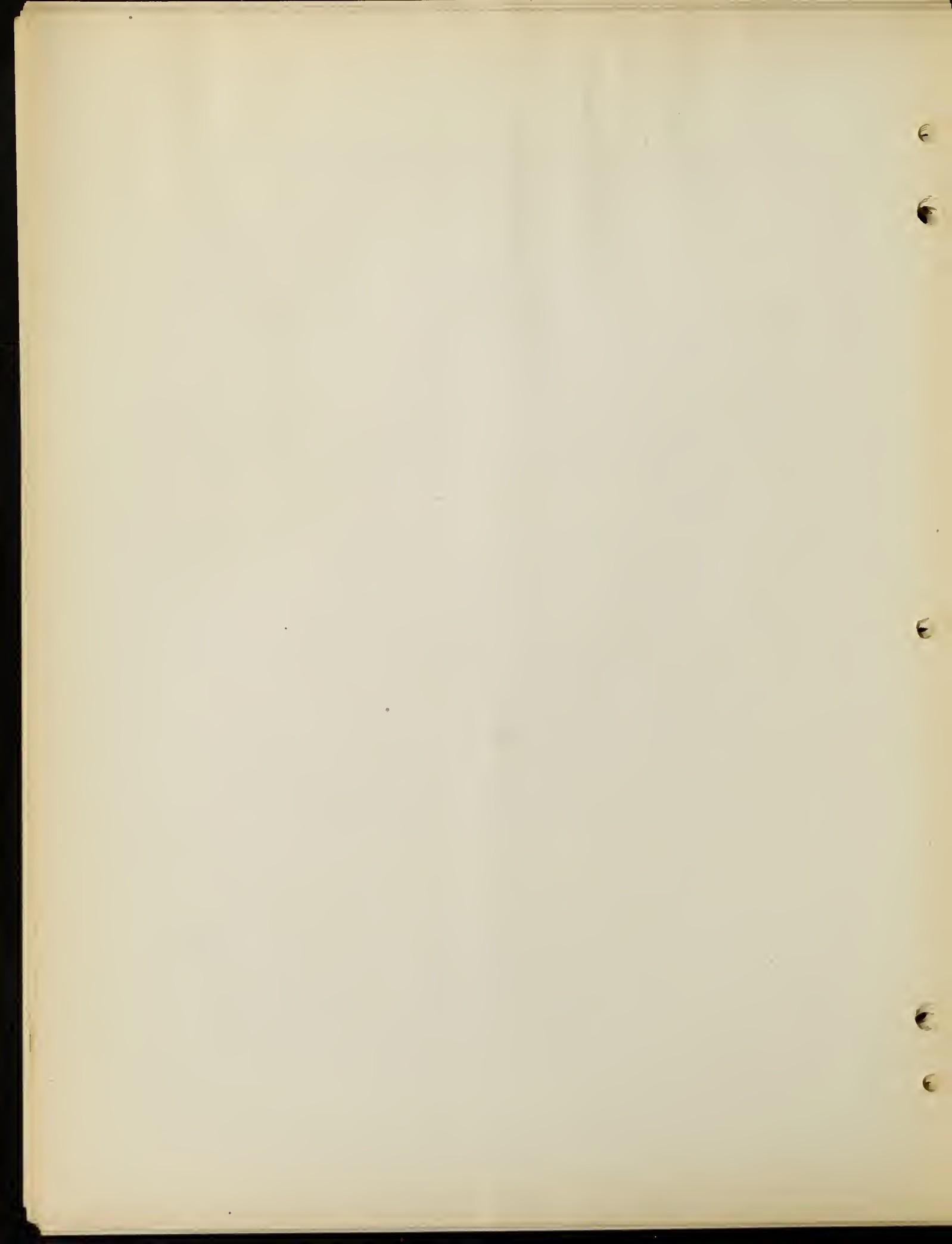
3. The State paid each town twenty percent of the amount received from the town during the preceding year by the state treasury as taxes, provided, however, the gross amount so paid by the State should not exceed \$6000 if any one year.

4. Town councils were authorized to divide the towns into school districts, which were empowered to build and repair school-houses and to continue schools beyond the time provided for by the state and town money.

5. The teacher must be a native or naturalized citizen of the United States, and must have a certificate of qualifications from the town council.

This law, however, was too advanced for the times. It met with vigorous hostility throughout the state (except in Providence), and was repealed in February, 1803.

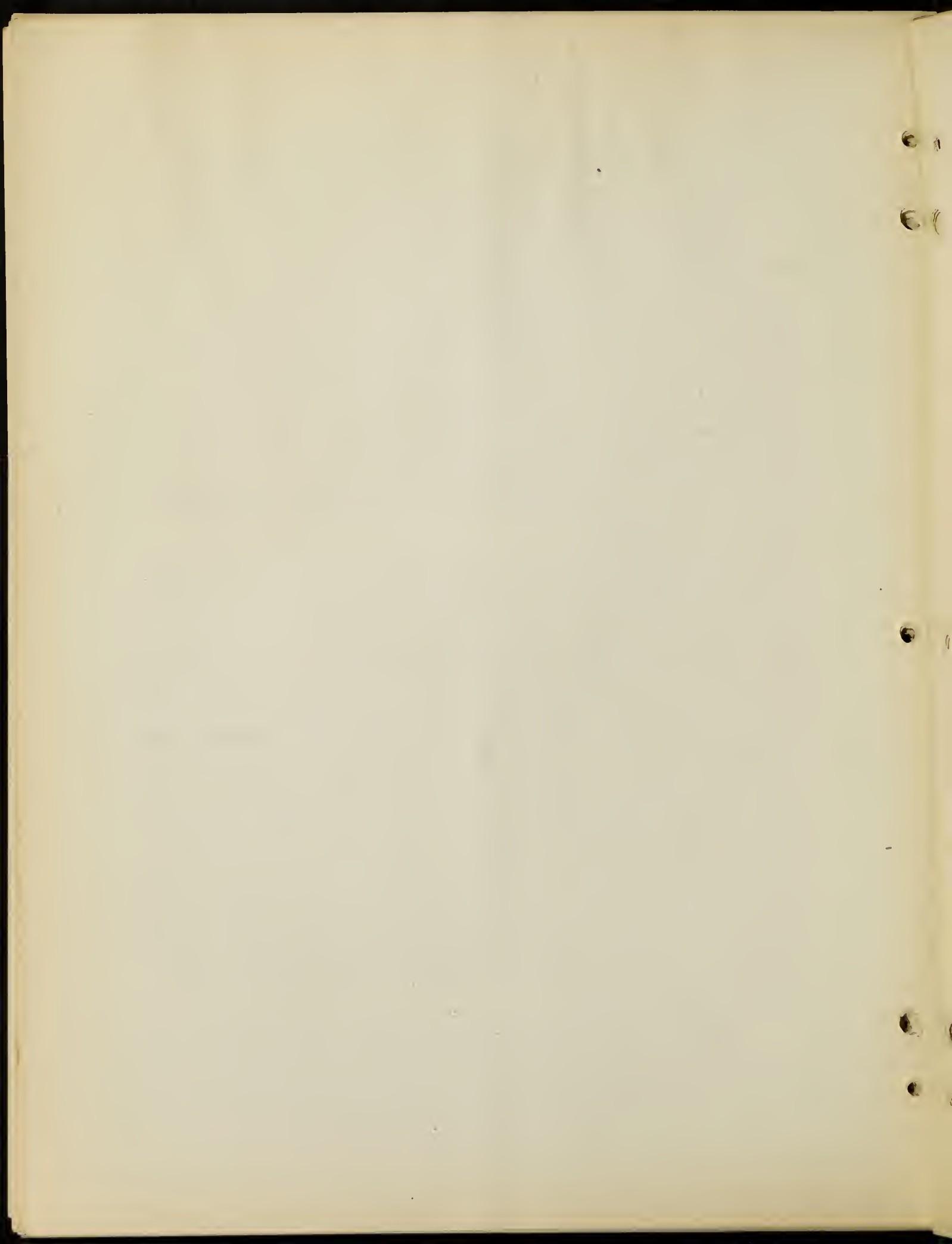
The most significant direct result of this agita-



tion and legislation was its effect upon the schools of Providence. "To carry out the system successfully," wrote John Howland, "a larger sum than hitherto appropriated was necessary, and I moved in town meeting an appropriation of \$4000. Some opponents said it was too much, and others, hoping to defeat the motion, opposed on the ground that it was too little. I therupon moved the insertion of \$6000 instead of \$4000, an opponent seconded the amendment, hoping thereby to kill it, and to the surprise of all, and the anger of the opponents, the amended motion was adopted."

In August, 1800, the first school committee was appointed and they with much natural intelligence and by hard labor organized a creditable system of public schools. The course of study included "spelling, accenting and reading both prose and verse, with propriety and accuracy, English grammar and composition (not previously taught), Geography (also a new subject), writing a good hand, and Arithmetic." Uniformity was provided for, also provision was made for discipline, good government and enforcement of attendance. By such a policy Providence set the pace for the state in administration and finance, a position the city has held ever since.

Although the law of 1800 was soon repealed, its influence persisted until in Jan., 1828, a second general act



was passed, intended to secure more adequate support, and better administration of public schools.

Section I provided that "all money that shall be paid into the general treasury by m<sup>a</sup>nagers of lotteries or their agents; also all money that shall be paid into said treasury by auctioneerr, for Duties accruing to the State, shall be set apart and paid over to the several towns in this State.....in proportion to their respective population under the age of sixteen years,.....to be by said towns appropriated to and for the exclusive purpose of keeping public schools;.....the sum, however, hereby appropriated to be paid over in any one year not to exceed ten thousand dollars.

Section II provided "that each town shall be and is hereby empowered to raise so much money by tax in each year, as a majority of the freemen in town meeting shall judge proper, to be appropriated to the purpose of public schools, not exceeding in any one year, double the amount to be in that year received by such town out of the general treasury, by the provisions of this act, etc. (Providence, however, was empowered to raise any sum the freemen might vote).

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Provision was also made in this act (Secs. 5-9) for the appointment and duties of school committees, for methods of accounting and keeping records, and for the assurance and method of distribution of a permanent state fund. For this purpose, \$5000 was appropriated, and yearly thereafter all lottery and auctioneers' dues in excess of the \$10000 required for distribution by Section I. (This fund was increased in 1857 by adding to it the U. S. Deposit Fund amounting to \$38,235.50).

This law formed the foundation of the state system of schools, but in many details it lacked clearness and precision. The need for more careful legislation led to the passage in January, 1859, of "an Act to Revise and Amend the Several Acts Relating to Public Schools"--consisting of twenty-seven sections covering all phases of current school work--perhaps the first serious attempt to secure a comprehensive code of school laws.

Section I provided "that the annual income of the \*United States Deposit Fund shall be paid over to the several towns.....for maintaining public schools.

\*In 1857, by act of Congress, surplus money in the federal treasury, amounting to about \$55,000,000 was deposited with the several states desiring it, in proportion to their representation in Congress, for safe keeping and repayment if demanded. The amounts received by the several New England States were:-

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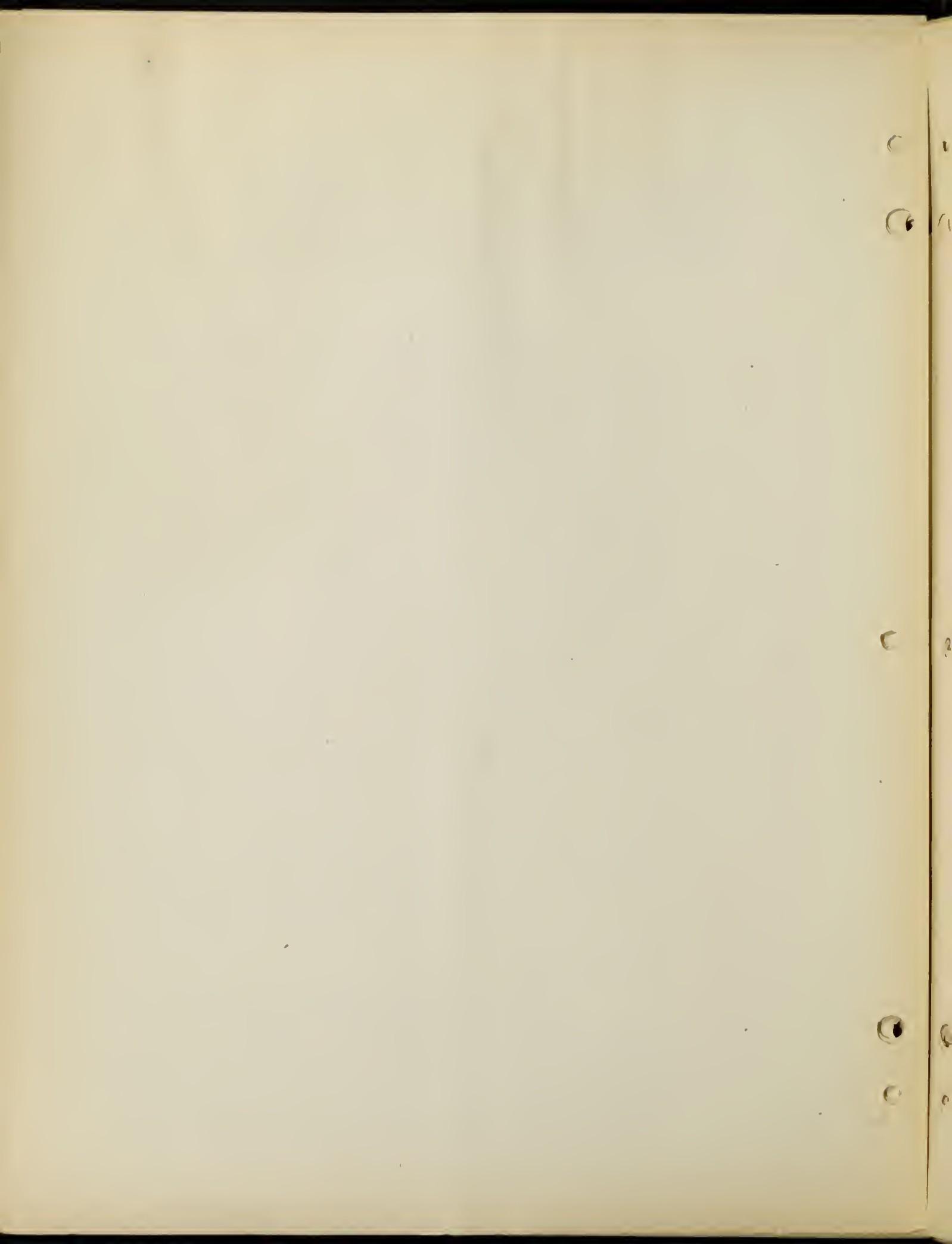
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Maine	None
New Hampshire	None
Vermont	\$669,086.79
Massachusetts	None
Rhode Island	\$1,82,335.50
Connecticut	\$765,662.20

Section 2 provided for increasing the state fund and for the distribution of state money.---"To the money derived from said source (U. S. Deposit Fund) shall annually be added enough from any money in the general treasury not otherwise specially appropriated to make up the sum of \$25000. The money received by the state from the managers of lotteries or from auctioneers for auction duties accruing to the state.....shall be applied to the permanent school fund. ....Money paid out.....shall be divided .....according to the respective white population under fifteen years of age, the colored population under the age of ten years, and five-fourteenths of the colored population between ten and twenty-four years, excepting Narragansett Indians."

Section 3 dealt with local taxation.  
"Each town may raise by tax.....money.....not exceeding in any one year double the amount received by such town from the general treasury.

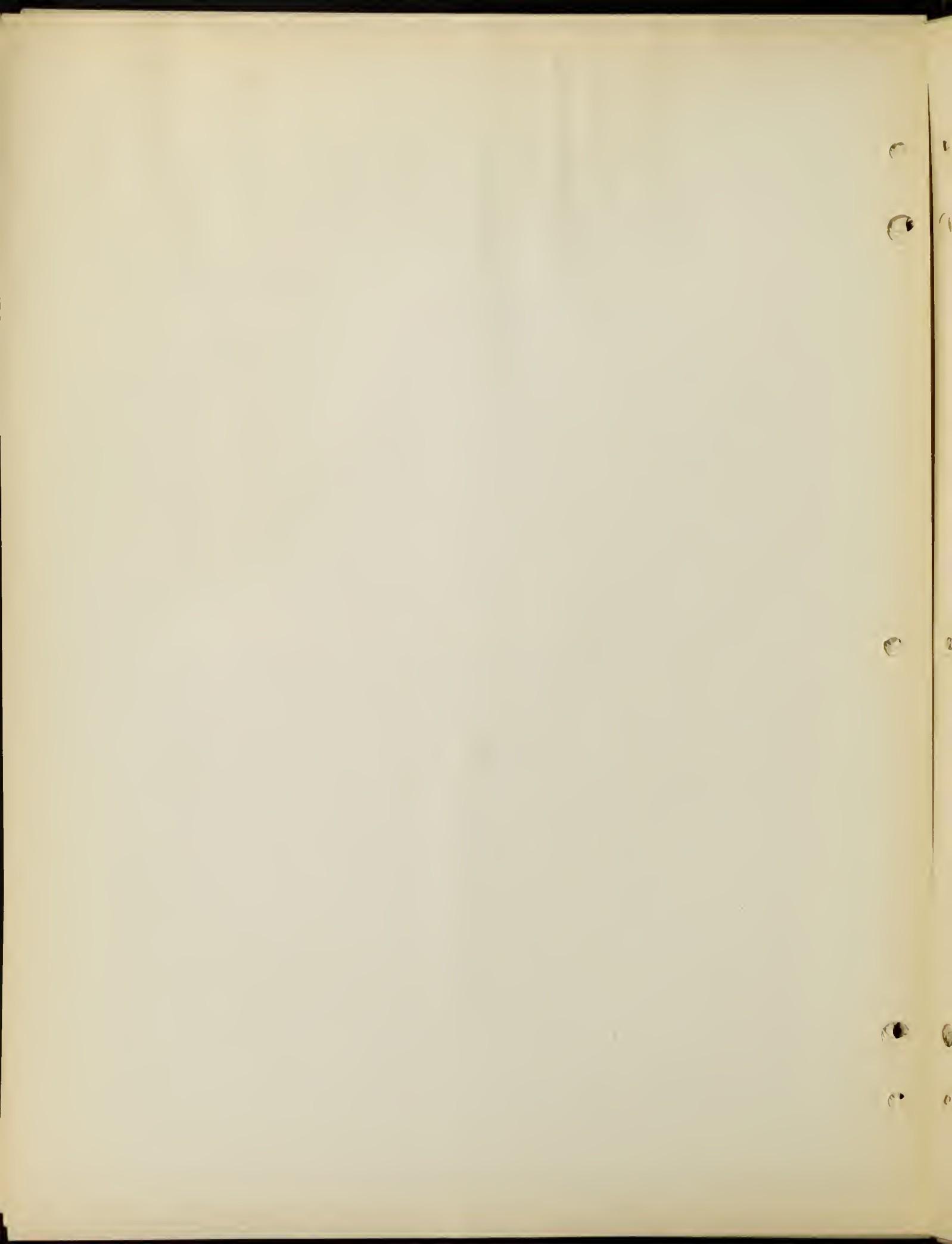


Sections 4-6 prescribed regulations for the distribution and application of moneys-salaries, repairs, supplies, etc.

Sections 9-37 contained general provisions concerning administration.

Later in the year an interesting special act was passed. "Whenever an amount of money sufficient to pay for fuel, rent and other incidental expenses shall not be provided by any town by taxation or otherwise, the school committee.....shall have power to assess a sum sufficient to pay such expenses, upon those who send scholars to the schools.....exempting.....such as they consider unable or too poor to pay."

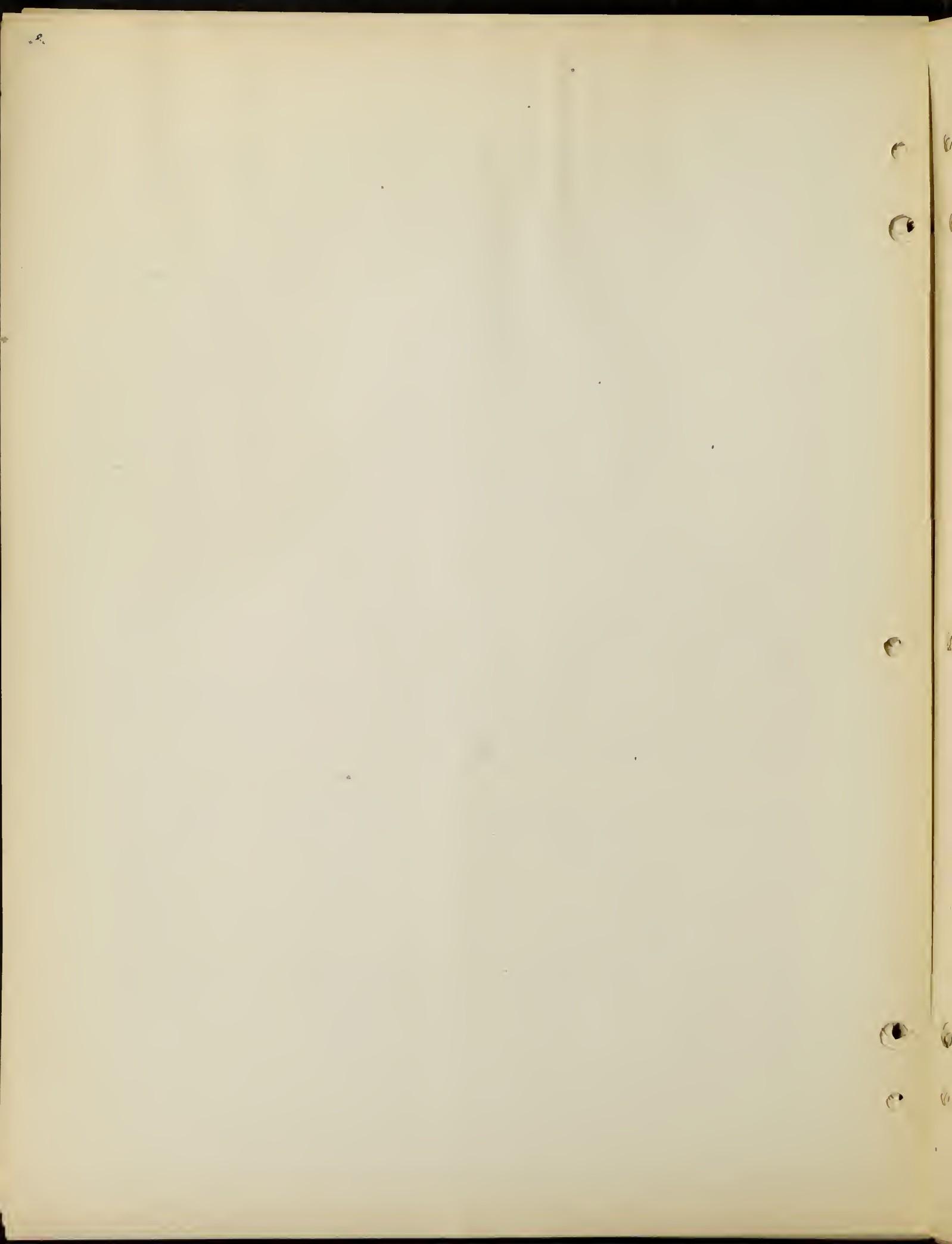
This code of laws of 1839, it will be seen, contains, though in crude form, most of the present day principles of free public schools for all children at public expense, and a careful perusal of the code reveals a rather efficient and distinctly creditable system of administration. But owing to lax public sentiment educational conditions continued to be generally unsatisfactory, and in 1843 the legislature voted "to appoint an agent to visit and examine the respective public schools of the state, collect information and report to the Legislature upon their condition and the most practicable means of improving the same." Gov. Fenner accordingly appointed Henry



Barnard of Connecticut on December 5th, 1845. His report and recommendations in 1844 resulted in the passage in the following year of a still more admirable code of laws that has continued without radical change and constitutes the basis of the present system of schools. It provided, Secs.(1-3) for state appropriations not to exceed \$25000 annually, state supervision and control; for powers and duties of towns (Secs. 4-9) to establish and maintain public schools--they must raise at least one third as much money as received the previous year from the general treasury before receiving state aid; for the establishment and administration of school districts (Secs. 10-19); for employment and duties of teachers (Secs. 20-21); and for miscellaneous regulations (Secs. 22-29).

Early state records are meagre, but show the following interesting items of organization:-

	1856	1844
State aid received by towns	\$25000.00	\$25095.74
Amount raised by towns	12575.00	27918.30
Number of schools	365	428
Number of instructors	427	515
Expended for instruction	\$32383.56	\$48335.76
Total number of scholars	13748	22156
Average attendance	12246	14526



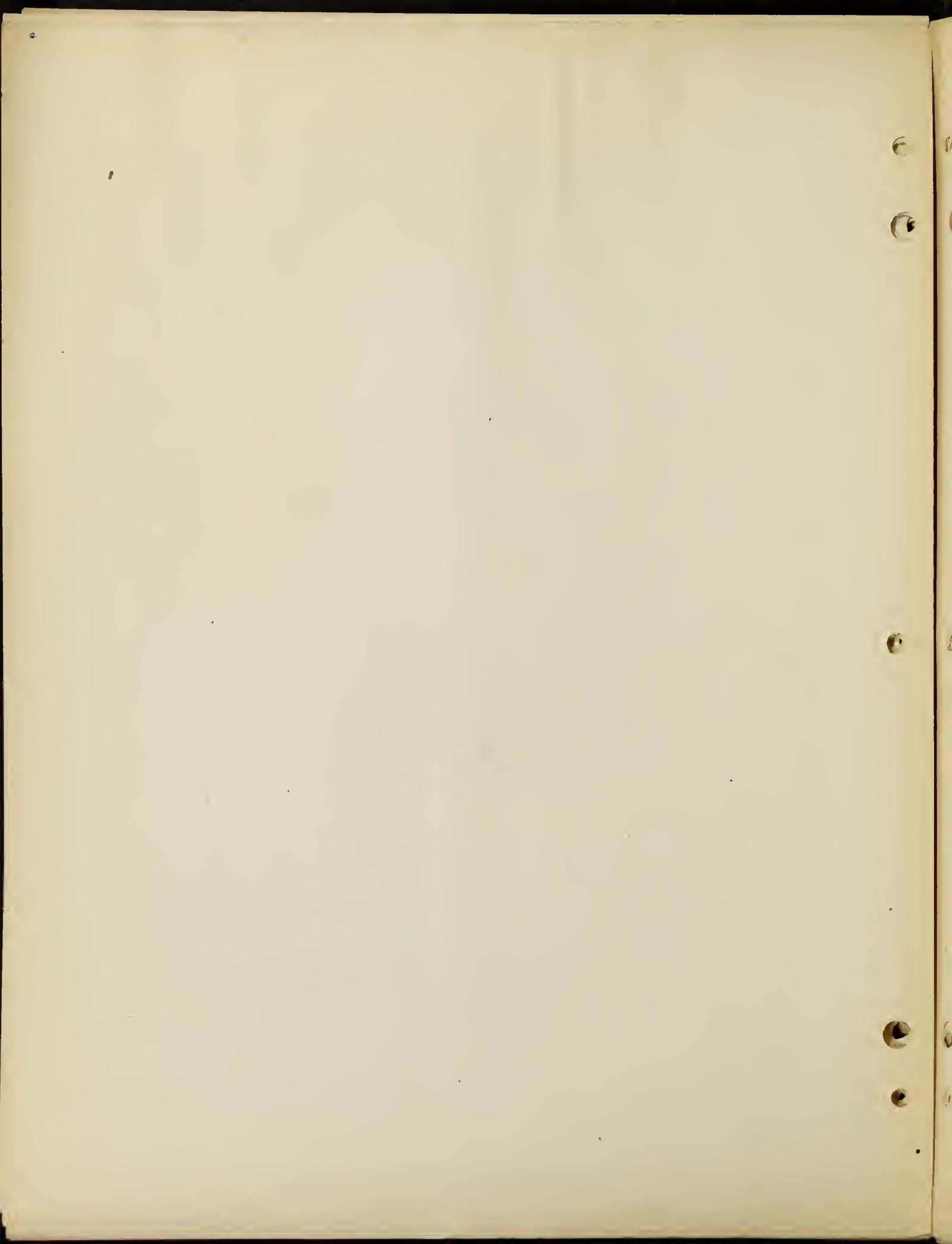
An interesting comparison of the support of public schools in New England is given by Henry Barnard in his annual report for 1845-46, pages 159-164. He finds that the schools of Rhode Island would require for their maintenance a tax raised by the towns leading to the following totals:-

Under the laws of Maine,	a total town tax of	45554.00
" " " Mass.	a required town tax of	56276.64
" " " " a voluntary "	" "	74887.40
" " " New Hampshire,	a town tax of	58090.50
" " " Vermont	" " "	26119.20
" " " Rhode Island	" " "	8223.36

(State aid for Rhode Island in 1846 amounted to \$25000.16).

No figures are given for Connecticut, where the schools were supported at this time almost entirely by the State. In 1822 legal obligation to raise a school tax in Connecticut ceased; and as a result only trivial amounts were raised by local taxation.

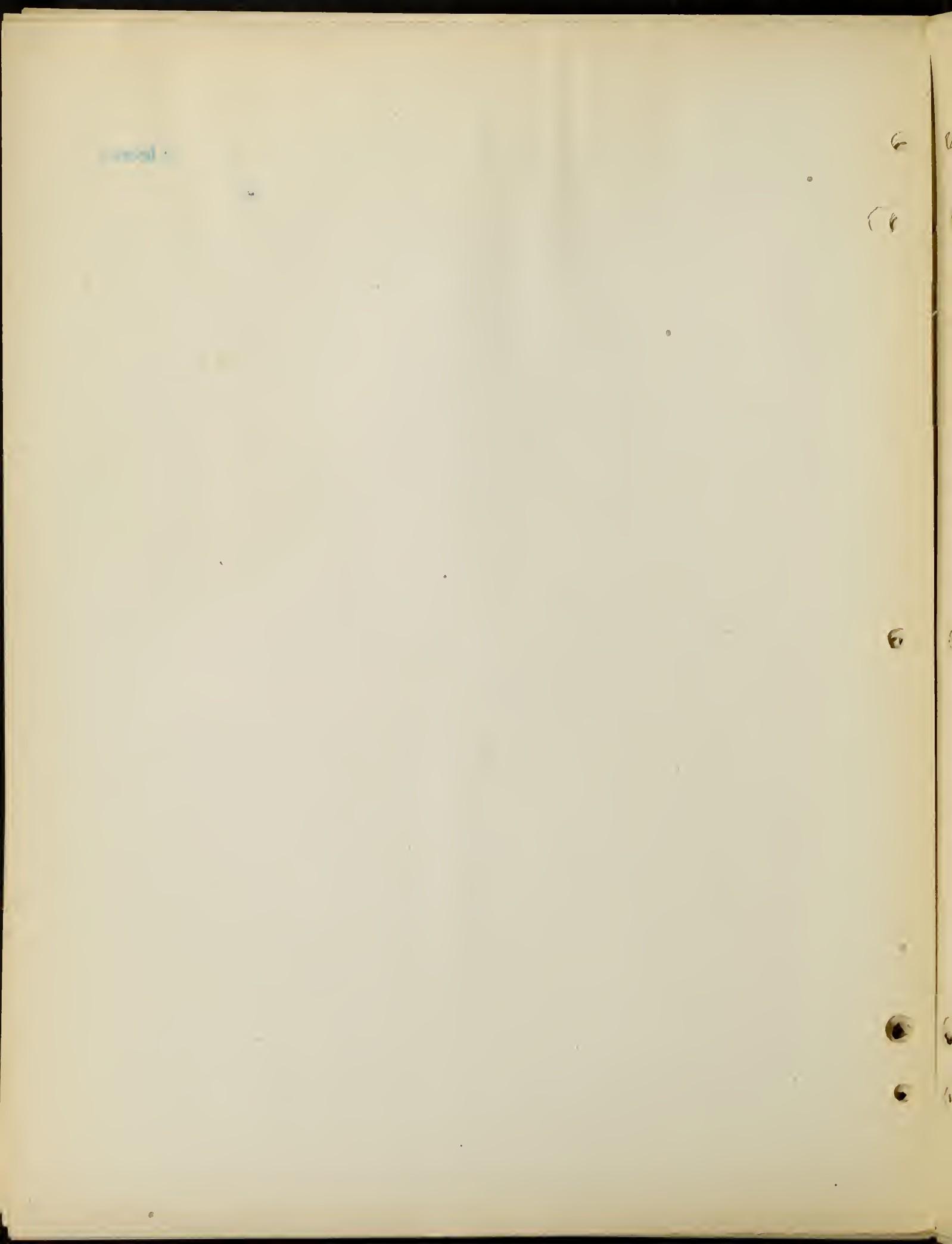
Connecticut schools suffered a serious relapse in the early part of the nineteenth century largely owing to the indifference of the people. This was fostered in no slight degree by the generous state aid which called for no appreciable sacrifice or exertion by communities to support legal schools. A large state contribution, distributed without strict requirements of services rendered had



the contrary effect to what was anticipated--the schools became poorer instead of better.

The state school fund of Connecticut, created by act of the General Assembly in May, 1795, had its origin in the sale of land in Ohio, known as the Western Reserve. The act provided that the principal sum to be received from the sale of lands belonging to the state, lying west of Pennsylvania, should be and remain a perpetual fund, the interest of which should be a proprietor to the support of schools in the several school societies (parishes), to be paid to said societies according to the list of polls and rateable estate, etc. The land was sold for \$1,200,000, and this principal was carefully guarded and even increased. In 1825 it amounted to \$1,720,000, and the income distributed from 1810 to 1825 averaged \$52,000.

The basis of distribution--according to polls, estates, etc., made it financially profitable to have poor schools, short terms and poor attendance, and quite naturally these results soon appeared. To overcome this defect the income was distributed after 1820 according to the number of children in town between four and sixteen years of age. This but partially remedied the trouble, for while the distribution now bore a more vital relation to the needs of the communities, it still placed a premium upon the neglect of such needs rather than upon adequate pro-



vision to meet the needs. Experience has shown that the most effective basis of state aid is upon the maintenance of approved schools and the average membership or attendance of such schools.

This state fund was secured for educational purposes by a constitutional provision in 1818 providing that..... "the School Fund shall remain a perpetual fund, the interest of which shall be inviolably appropriated to the support and encouragement of the public or common schools throughout the state and for the equal benefit of all the people thereof."

As has already been stated, the income of this fund was sufficiently large to lead to the general abolishment of local taxes in 1832. This fund was supplemented in 1837 by the addition of the United States fund ("762,662), deposited with the several towns with the provision (Acts of 1836) that at least half the income thereof should be devoted to the promotion of education. (The whole income was later (Acts of 1855) assigned to education.)

Of the effects of this state aid, as well as of general school conditions,\* Henry Barnard wrote a most illuminating account in his first annual report.

"School districts have not, except in

\*Appointed as first Sec'y of Board of Education in Conn. 1839.

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a few instances been clothed with the power of taxation and election of their officers (p. 14), hence wide-spread apathy prevails regarding school.".....

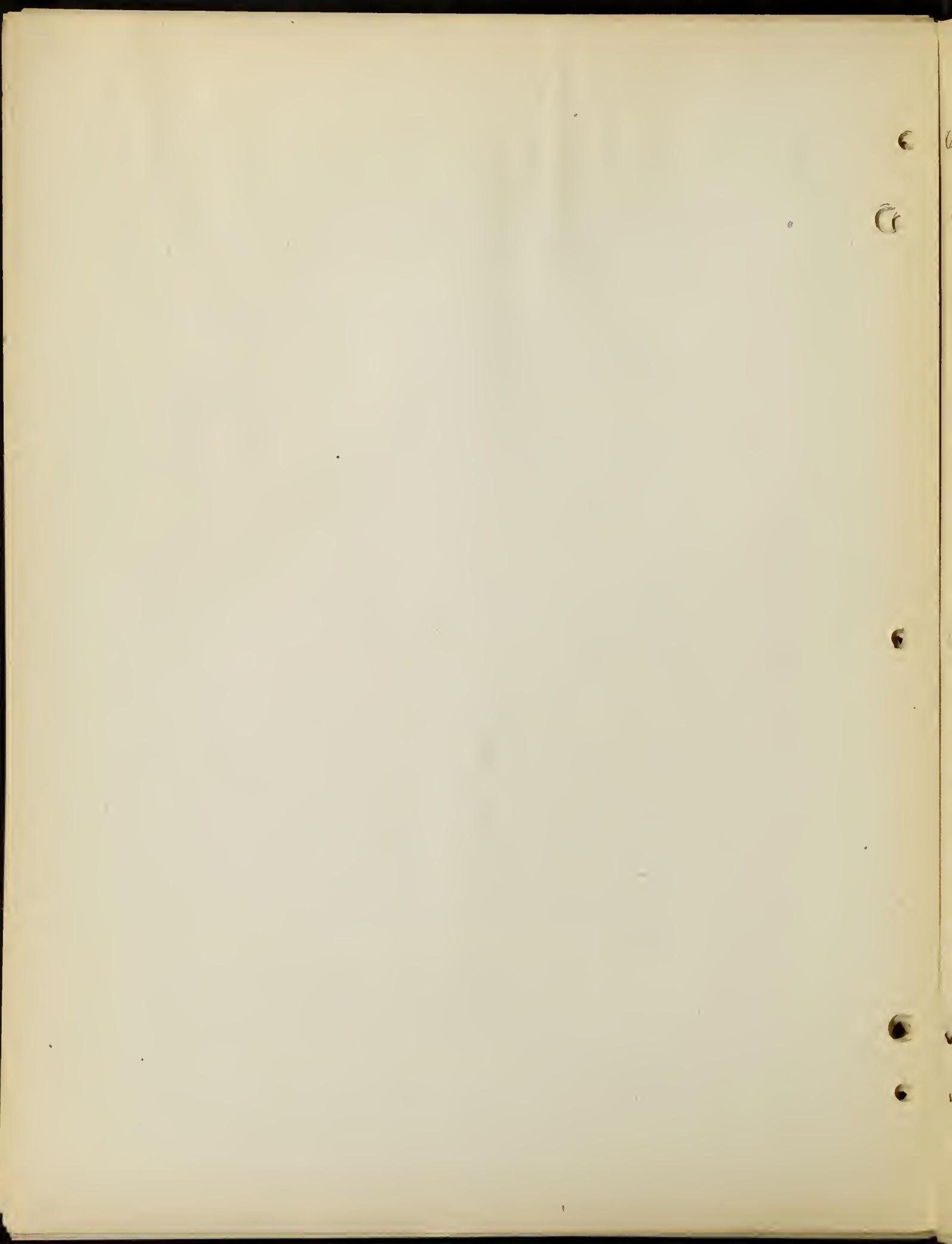
Sources of revenue were summed up as follows (pp.22 ff.):-

1. School Fund. Capital, \$2028531.20. Dividends for year ending April 1, 1839, \$104,900, giving to each child enumerated \$1.25 (distributed to school societies and through them to school districts according to the number of persons between the ages of four and sixteen, and to be applied wholly to wages and board of instructors).

2. One-half the income of the U. S. Town Deposit Fund, now amounting to \$764670.61. (This was distributed in the same manner as the State School Fund, but no statistics could be obtained, and the appropriation of the income was always one of the vexed questions at town meetings).

3. Society and Local School Funds. Principal over \$100000, and annual income of nearly \$7000.

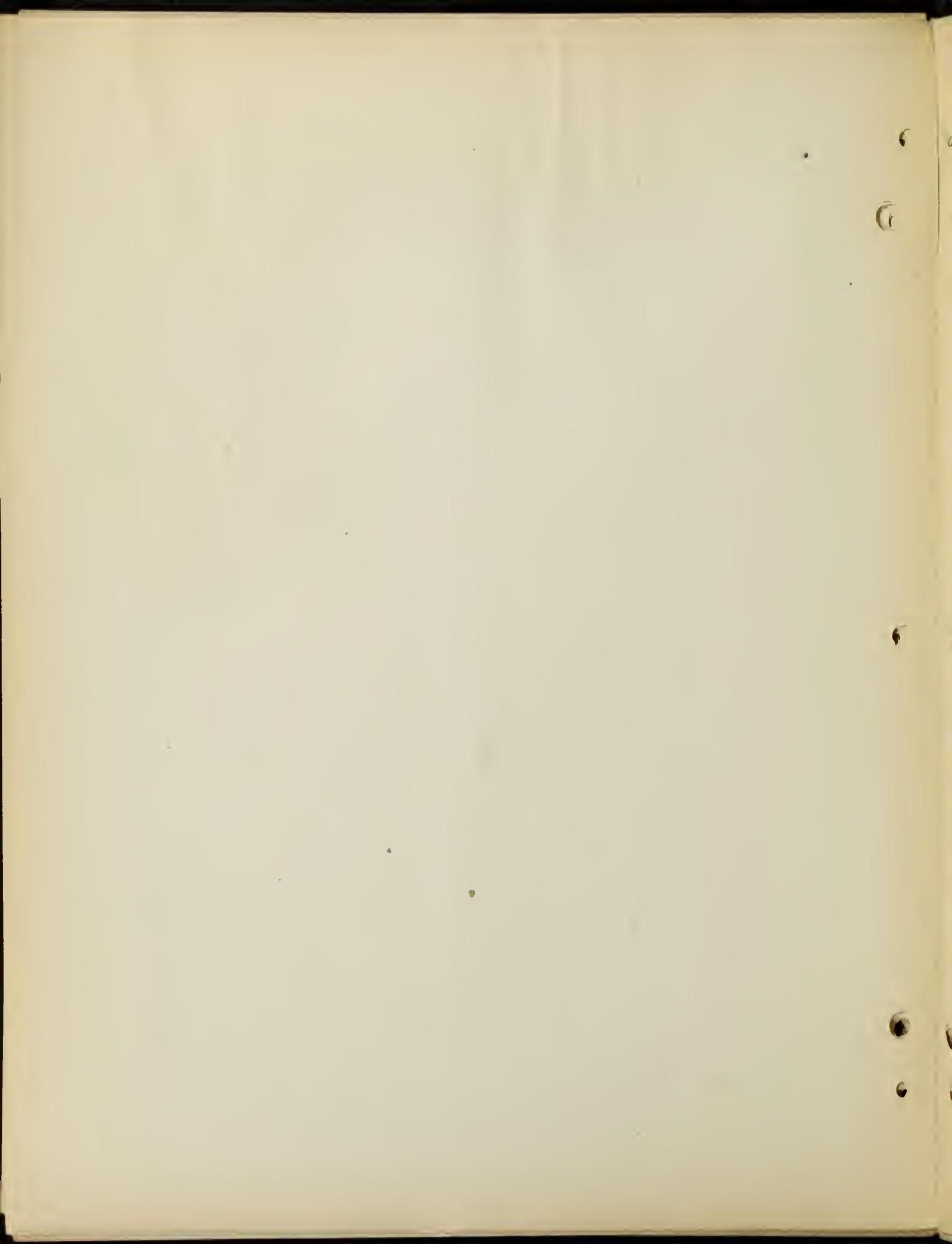
4. School Society Tax. "I know of



several school societies which tax themselves regularly to a small extent. (!)....but no aggregate is obtainable."

5. Avails of District Taxes. "Of the amount I know nothing. It is always narrowed down to the objects coming within the strictest letter of the law,--building and repairs of school-house and expenses for fuel. The district committee have no temptation to go beyond the general standard of liberality (!) which prevails in school districts on this subject."

6. Avails of Taxes on the Parents of Children Attending School. Here again a serious defect in school support appears for Barnard says-- 'Deficiencies are levied upon the parents or guardians of children attending according to the number of days' attendance or according to the number of scholars. ....Owing to reliance now placed on public funds for the support of public schools, it leaves the question of continuance of a school to be decided under the most unfavorable circumstances. ....It is an inducement to parents to keep their children at home on any trifling demand for their services. ....Wealthier members withdraw children



from public schools (to send them to private schools), thus throwing the burden of expense upon the poorer classes."

That the schools, in spite of the comparatively large public funds, were far from being well financed is a fact that Burnard emphasized and re-iterated. In this same report he speaks again (p. 52) of the "wide spread and paralyzing apathy over the public mind in relation to the whole subject" and calls attention to the lack of provision for and consequent great variety of books in the same district, often in the same school, to the lack of any practical regulation by committees, and to other grievous wrongs and troubles.

In his annual report for 1841 he calls attention in even more emphatic terms to the shortcomings of the schools; and listed (pp. 77. ff) the most glaring defects.---

Poor and irregular attendance.

Small or poor districts.

Great diversity and inadequate supply of textbooks.

Constant change of teachers.

Lack of supervision.

Poor principles of distribution of school monies.

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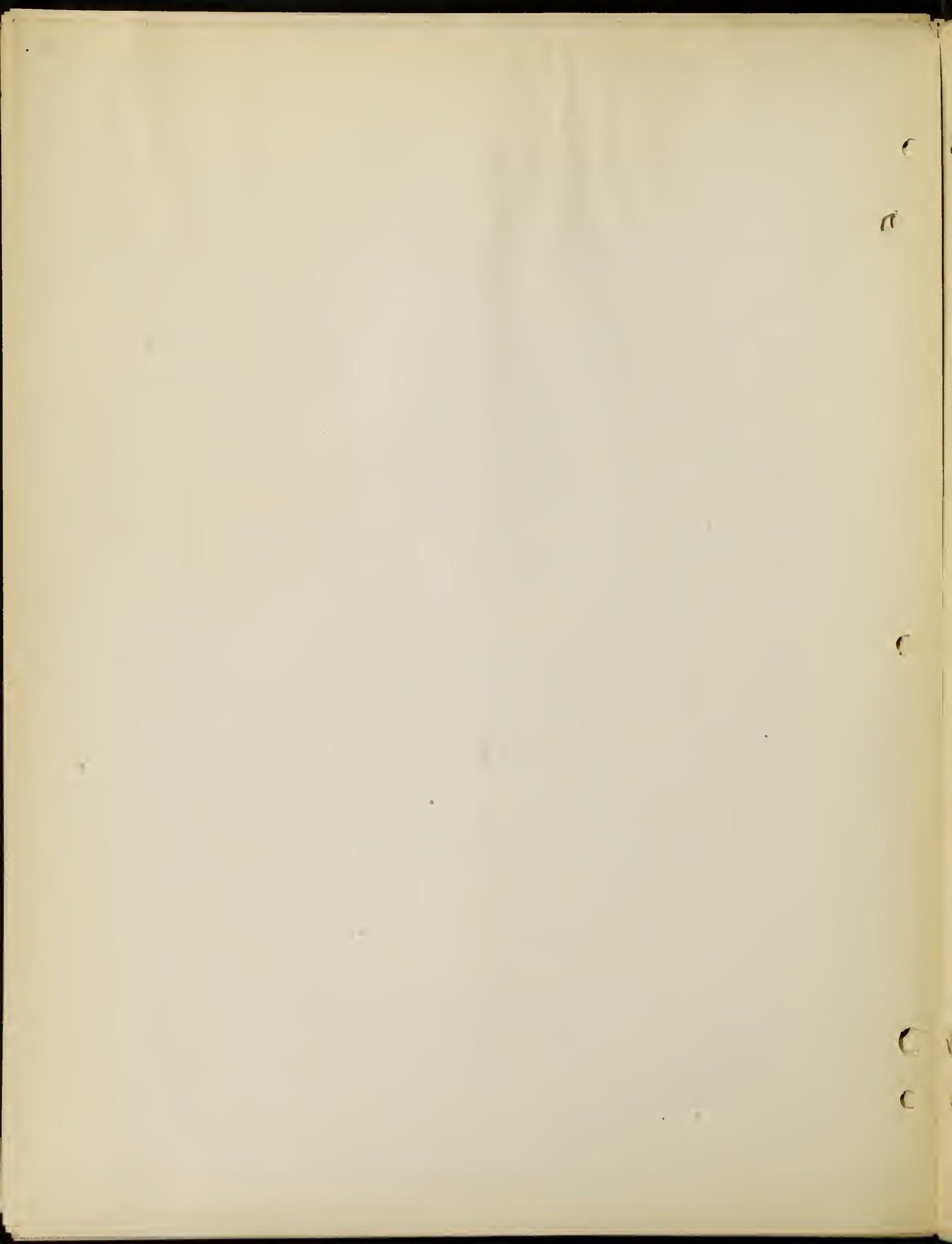
From 1839 until 1854 a district tax for current expenses was permitted, though the chief reliance continued to be placed upon the income from the public funds and assessments. In 1854 an obligatory town tax of .01 on \$100 for schools was established, but it was not until 1868 that the town tax was increased sufficiently to make schools free, thus abolishing the rate bill (assessments).

As in the other states early statistics were meagre and crude. For 1839 the following figures are given. (Ann. Report for 1839 pp. 20 ff.)

Aggregate attendance of children (total enrolment)

for any portion of the winter	54550
Average attendance	41832
Average length of winter schools	18 wks.
Average length of total school year (for towns having both summer and winter terms)	8 mos.
Number of male teachers	996
Number of female teachers	296
Average wages per month, exclusive of board	
for male teachers	\$15.48
Ditto for female teachers	8.73

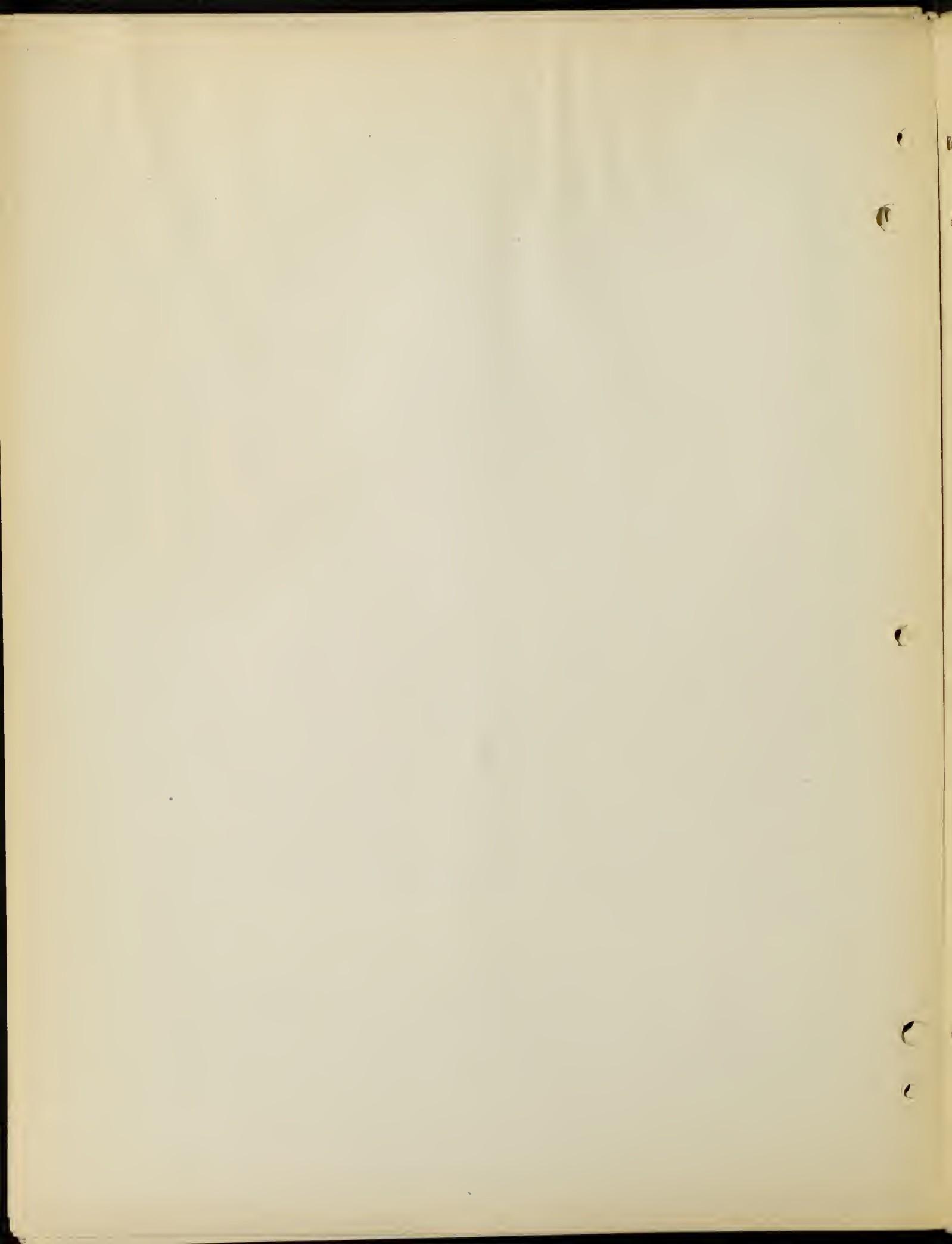
Connecticut furnished another instance of the pernicious district system, aggravated by the fact that the



state fund paid practically all the bills. The school system of "societies" (a heritage of church control) was generally unsatisfactory. Originally "an example for other states and the admiration of the Union" (Kentucky legislator's Report, 1822), the schools and the Connecticut system with no supervision were running down. The richer classes sent over ten thousand children in 1838 to private schools, throwing the common schools into disrepute; parents took little interest; teachers were poor and poorly paid.

The heroic constructive work of Henry Barnard was interrupted from 1843 to 1849, (when he was in Rhode Island) and the inertia continued to be a serious detriment. The downward trend seems to have been permanently checked about 1850, the time of Barnard's return and the establishment of the first normal school and of a series of institutes for teachers' improvement. A more solid and permanent basis for the school system was worked out by the state. Nevertheless, progress was slow, and radical improvements in finance and administration are found only after the Civil War.

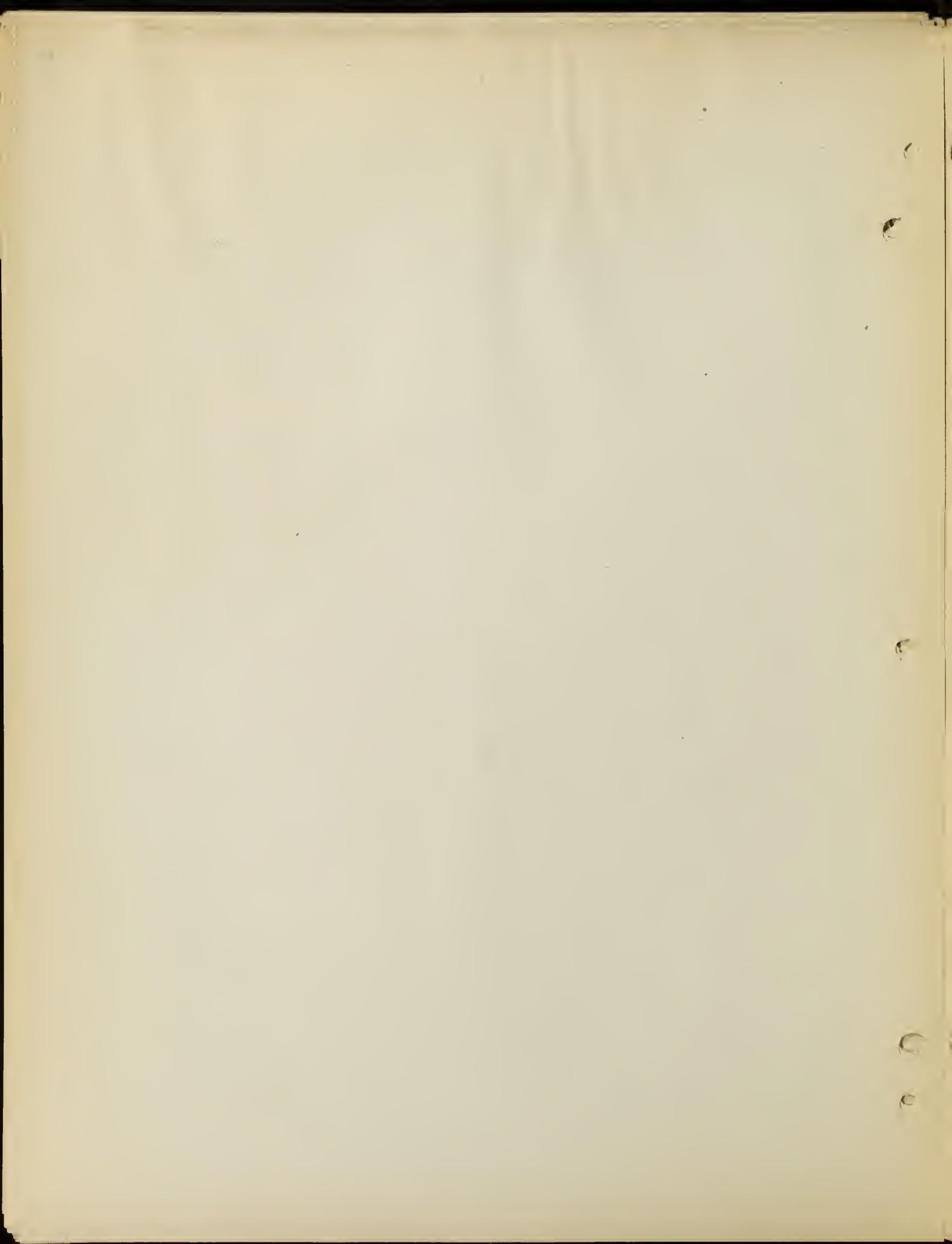
The history of the schools of the three northern states shows marked similarity in character, and is largely a repetition of the experiences of the three southern



states. The school problems were, and have continued to be, largely rural and the district system uniformly in vogue duplicated the administrative features and shortcomings already mentioned. With but the needed changes in dates and personalities the story is the same in all essentials. Some details of school support, however, were very different and should be noted.

In the year following its admission to the Union Maine passed its first school law--January, 1821. This law provided (Sec. 1) for a town or plantation tax of not less than forty cents for each inhabitant, according to the next preceding census of the states. A proportion of the money raised in each year.....was assigned to each school district according to the number of children therein between the ages of four and twenty-one years,.....but any money raised in excess of the requirement of the act might be distributed as the town or plantation might determine. Failure to raise and expend the required minimum involved a penalty of not less than twice nor more than four times the amount of such deficiency (Sec. 5).

Aside from financial provisions the law included many details regarding election of committees, qualifications of teachers and general administration. Experience revealed defects and remedial legislation was enacted in 1823, 1827 and 1852.



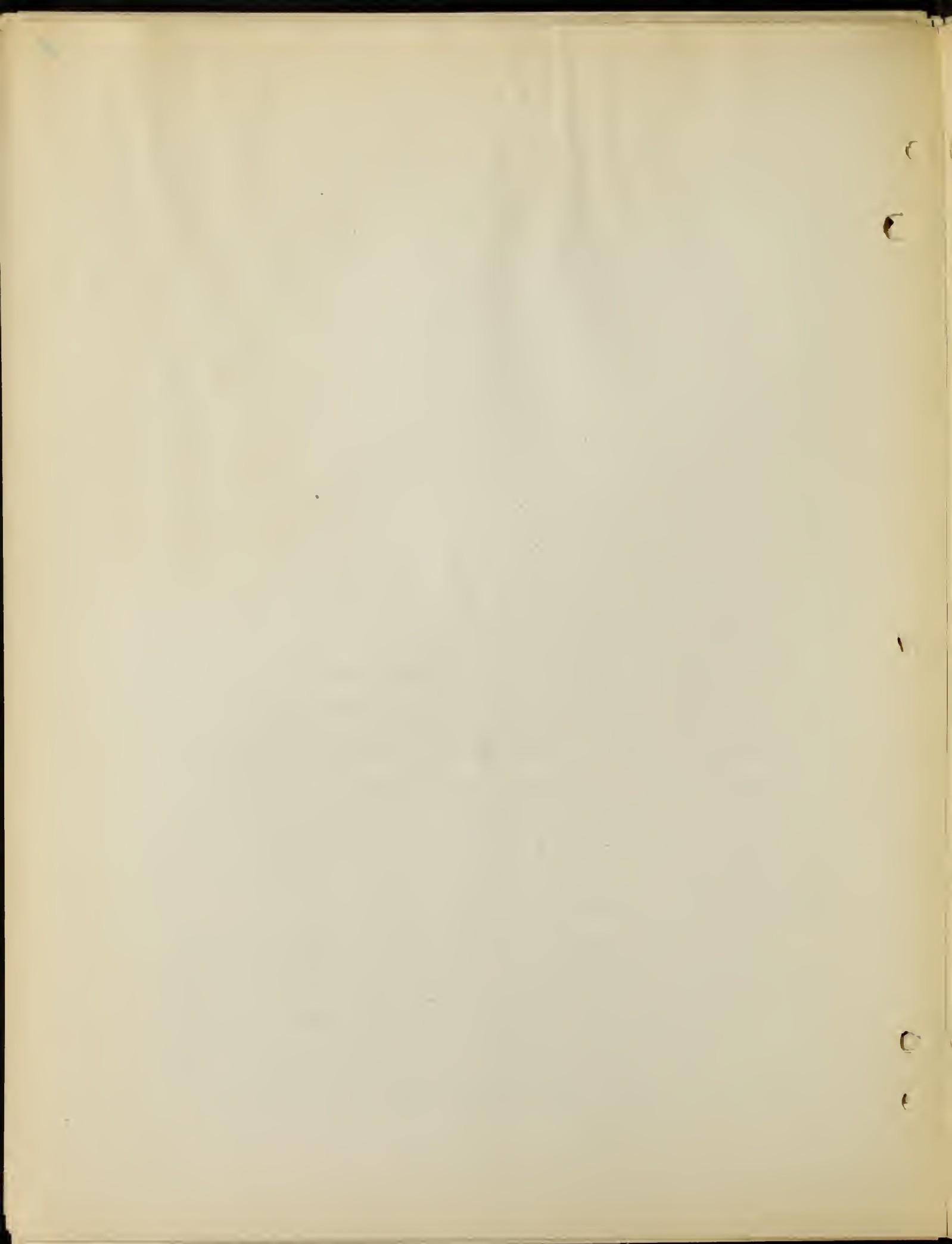
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In 1826, twenty townships of the public land were set apart as a basis of a state school fund. This provision was amended in 1832 to include the income of any public lands hitherto set aside for the ministry for the support of primary schools. (Ch. JX, Acts of 1832). In 1833 bank taxes of  $1/2 \%$  on capital stock were set aside for the support of primary schools, to be apportioned annually among the towns "according to the number of scholars in the several towns."

These three sources of revenue provided the means of support of public education until the end of the century.

Widely prevalent defects in the public schools led to the appointment of a committee at a state teachers' convention, held in Augusta in January, 1846, "to consider defects in our educational system and to suggest measures for their removal." The report of this committee emphasized the prevalent school defects we have noted in the southern states--- multiplying school districts, inefficiency of school committees, poorly qualified teachers, and the want of proper classification in schools arising from multiplicity of school books and lack of system in courses of study.

As a chief remedial measure, the committee strongly recommended the establishment of a State Board of Education, a matter which had been agitated for three years, and as a result the Legislature enacted a bill in July, 1846, establishing such a Board, which should appoint at its first



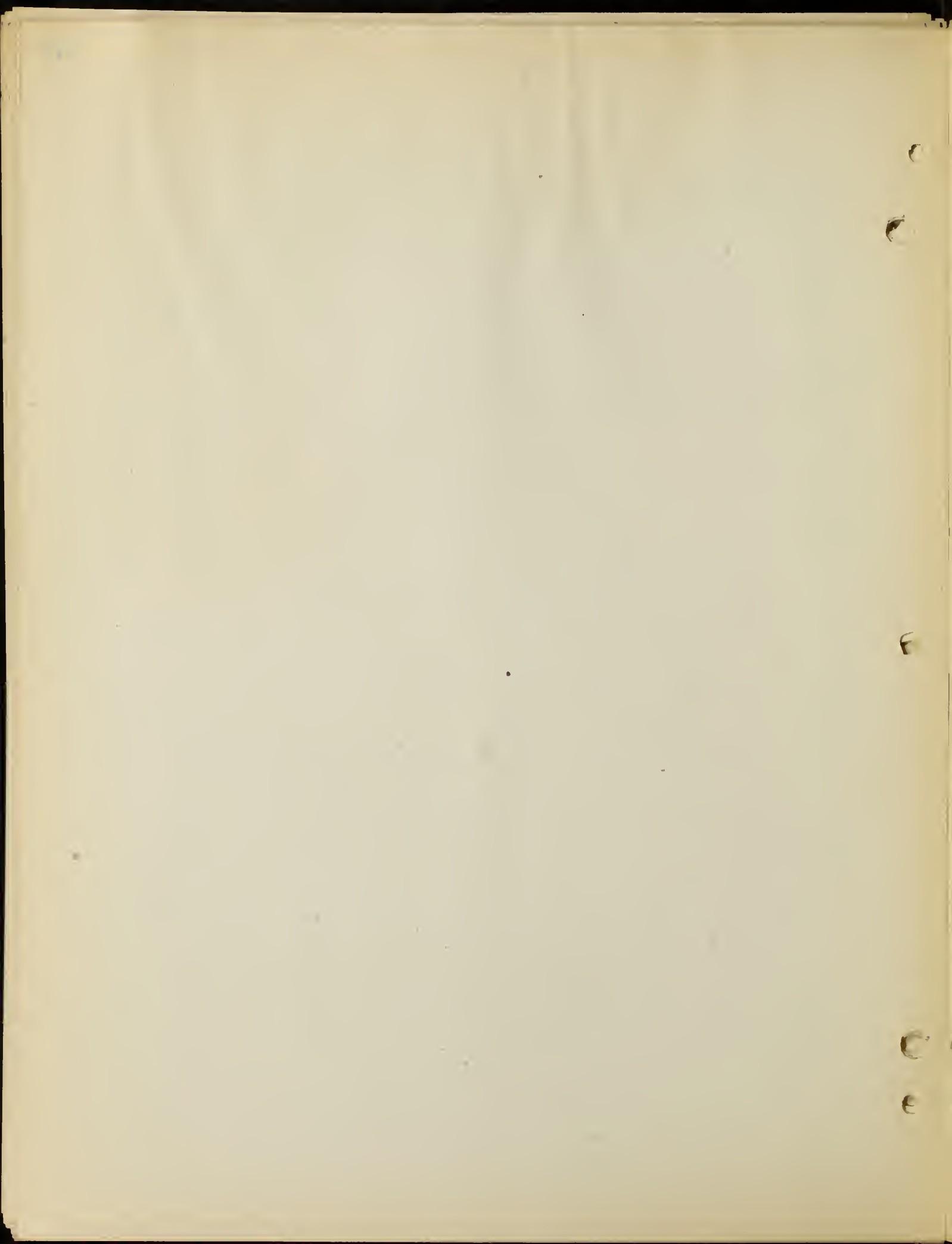
meeting in each year a Secretary (State Superintendent).

This Board was to be composed of one member from each county and to have the usual duties of advisory supervision and control of the public schools.

The first annual report of the Secretary, issued in May, 1847, gives the following data:-

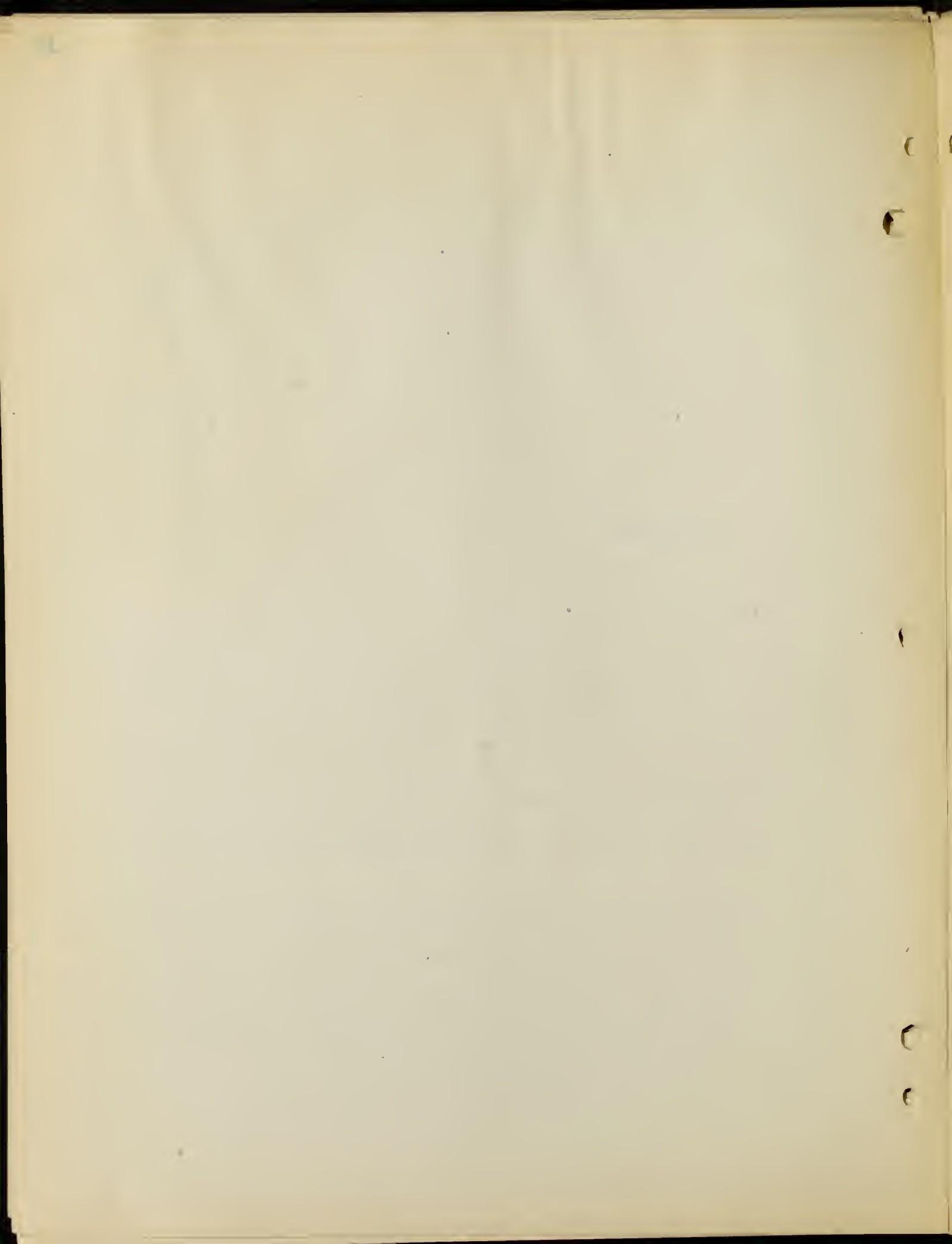
Whole number of persons between four and twenty-	
one years	201,992
" " in winter schools	94,217
" " in summer schools	96,127
Average length of school year	21 wks. 1 da.
Average monthly wages of male teachers exclusive of board	\$16.71
Average monthly wages of female teachers exclusive of board	\$6.08

Ten years later, if one may judge from statistics, no appreciable progress had been made. While the school population had increased from 201,992 to 256,248 the average enrollment had grown from 96,127 to but 96,227, in truth a relative decrease. The average length of the school year had decreased from 21 weeks to 18.9 weeks. Teacher's wages had improved slightly,--of men to \$20.57 and of women to \$7.60 a month.



Immediately following the Revolution (June, 1877) the legislature of New Hampshire passed an act requiring "selectmen to assess annually the inhabitants of their respective towns, at the rate of five pounds for every twenty shillings of their proportion of the public taxes for the time being, which sum shall be applied to the sole purpose of keeping an English Grammar school, or schools, for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, and in case of ashire or halfshire town the school must also teach Latin and Greek languages. A teacher must produce a certificate from some able and reputable school master or preceptor of some academy or president of some college, that he is well able to teach such school." An interesting commentary upon the universal tendency to neglect school expenditures is furnished by the further requirement that selectmen "must pay the whole amount out of their own goods and estates for keeping school in that town" in case of evasion of the law, and the town clerk was required to see to the proper application of the money.

Such local taxes provided the entire money raised for the support of schools for over thirty years. The rate was raised repeatedly by the legislature and by substantial additions, based always upon the public (state) tax paid by the towns--shown best in tabular form.



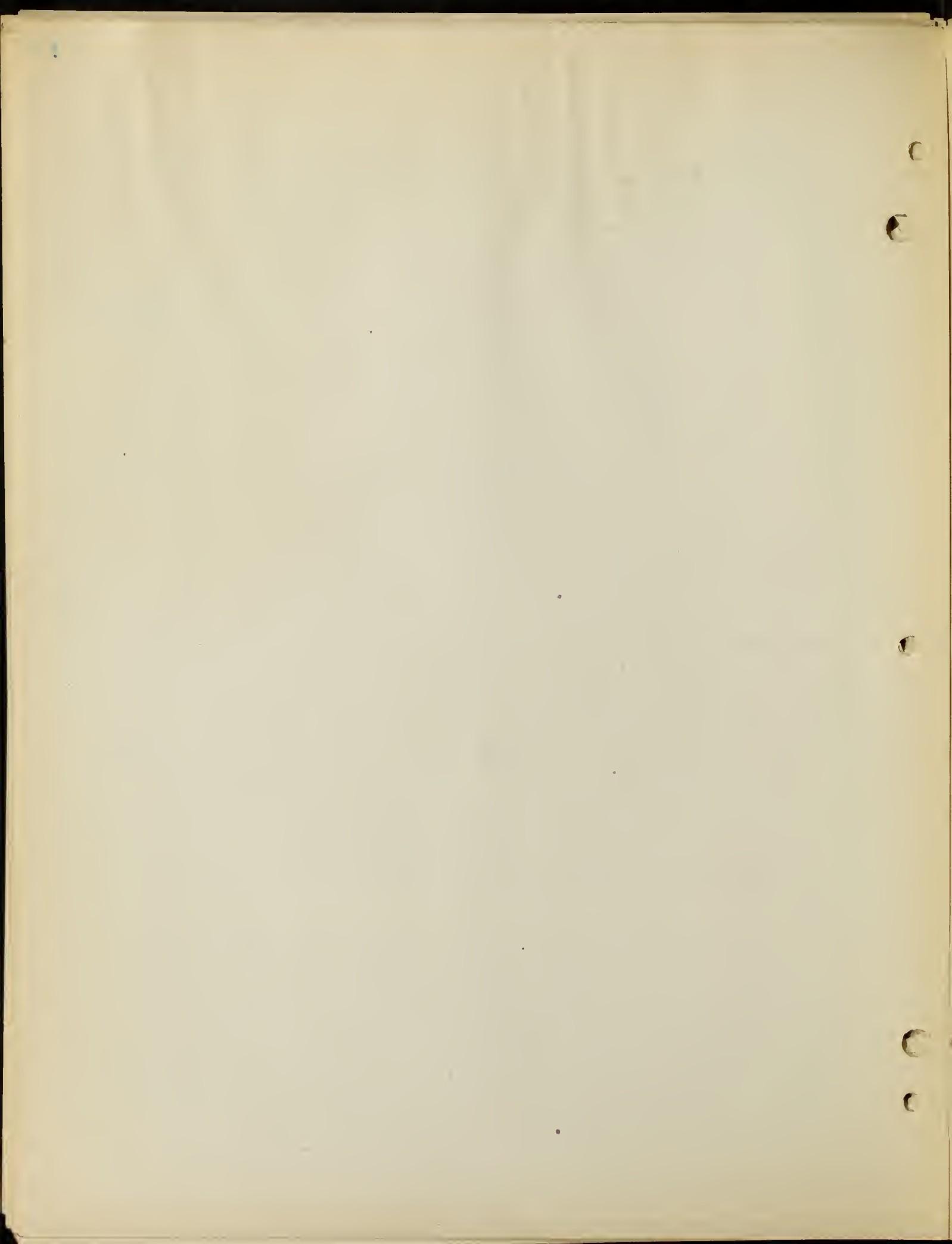
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1791 £7 1/2 school tax for every £1 of public taxes.

1799	\$50	"	"	"	"	\$1	"	"	"
1804	45	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	"
1807	70	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	"
1818	90	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	(yielded) "(\$90000)
1855	150	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	"
1867	250	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	"
1870	550	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	"

These figures show a growing appreciation of the value of common schools, but there was also a widespread desire for the establishment of a college at the expense of the state, and on June 29, 1821 an act was passed establishing a "literary fund" designed for endowing or supporting a college for higher instruction. The money was to be raised by a tax of \$50 per \$1000 on bank paper, (currency) which should be stamped and approved by the treasurer of the State. An optional method of contributing to this fund was the annual payment of 1/2 of one per cent on the capital stock, an option generally accepted and subsequently made the sole method by law.

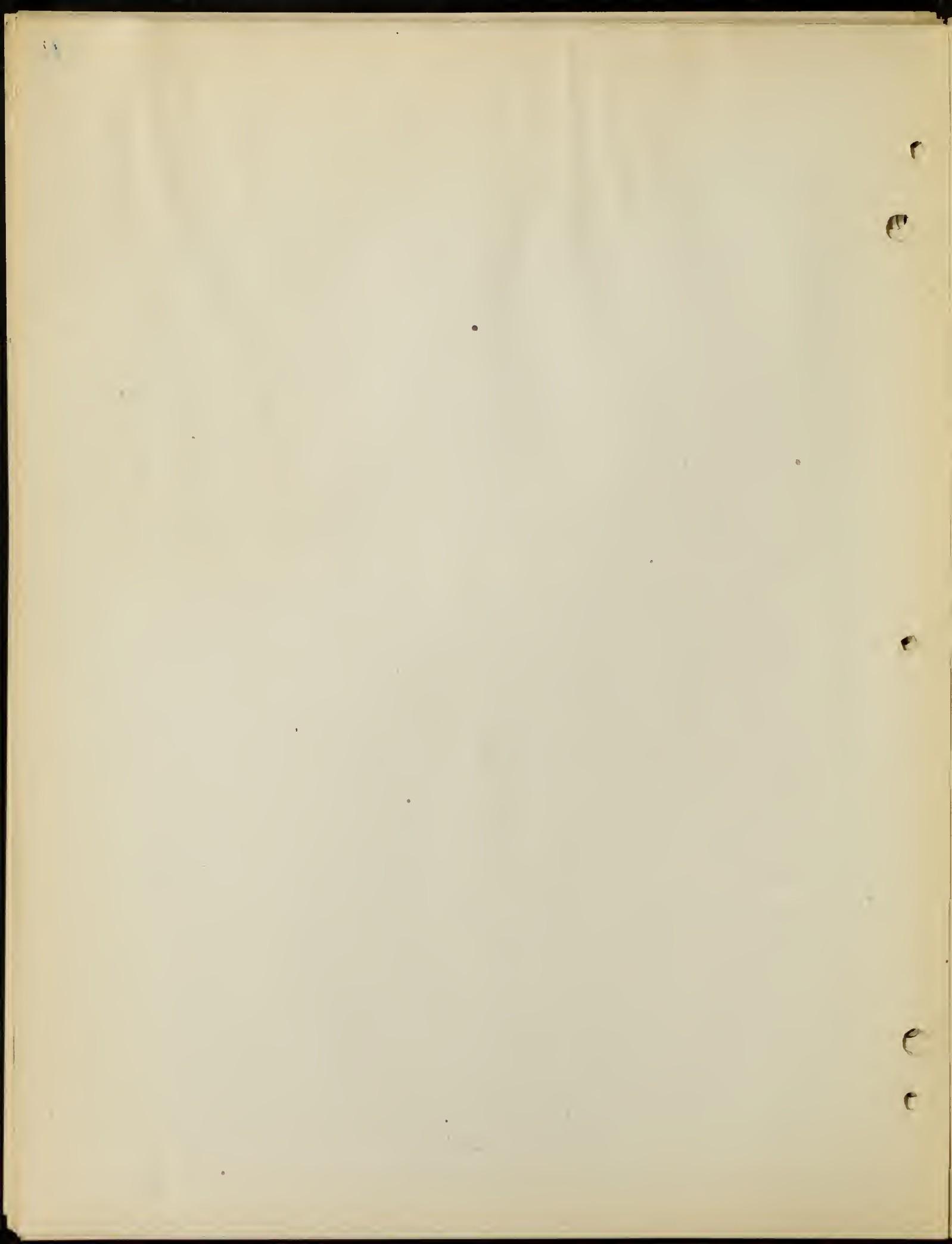
In 1828 the idea of a state college was given up, and the fund, then \$64000, was made available for common schools. There-after the yearly revenue of the bank tax was distributed to towns according to the number of scholars of not less than two weeks' attendance within the year. The amount in



1845 was "\$6848.66."

Influenced, no doubt, to some extent by conditions and legislation in southern New England States, New Hampshire passed a comprehensive and well-proportioned act in 1827, drawn with great ability and care, an act which provided for districting towns, for financial support of schools, for appointment and duties of school committees, for raising qualifications of teachers, for direction of text-books used and instruction given, for written reports and returns of school records, and for the promotion of individual and civic virtues.

Excellent as this law was, it must be acknowledged that there was no appreciable improvement in the character and work of the common schools of the state until after the creation of the office of Commissioner of Education in 1846. Reports were not obligatory, hence statistics were not returned to the secretary of the state, and little was known in general about the schools, which showed the wildest diversity of rank, work and organization. Abuses of the district system, poor and incompetent teachers, ungraded and haphazard instruction and other defects were only too common. Progress was very slow, due largely to the thinly scattered population, and the lack of any strong centralized power to enforce the law. It is not, indeed, until after the Civil War that we find any radical and noteworthy advance, when, owing to the continuous efforts of the State Commissioner, and the

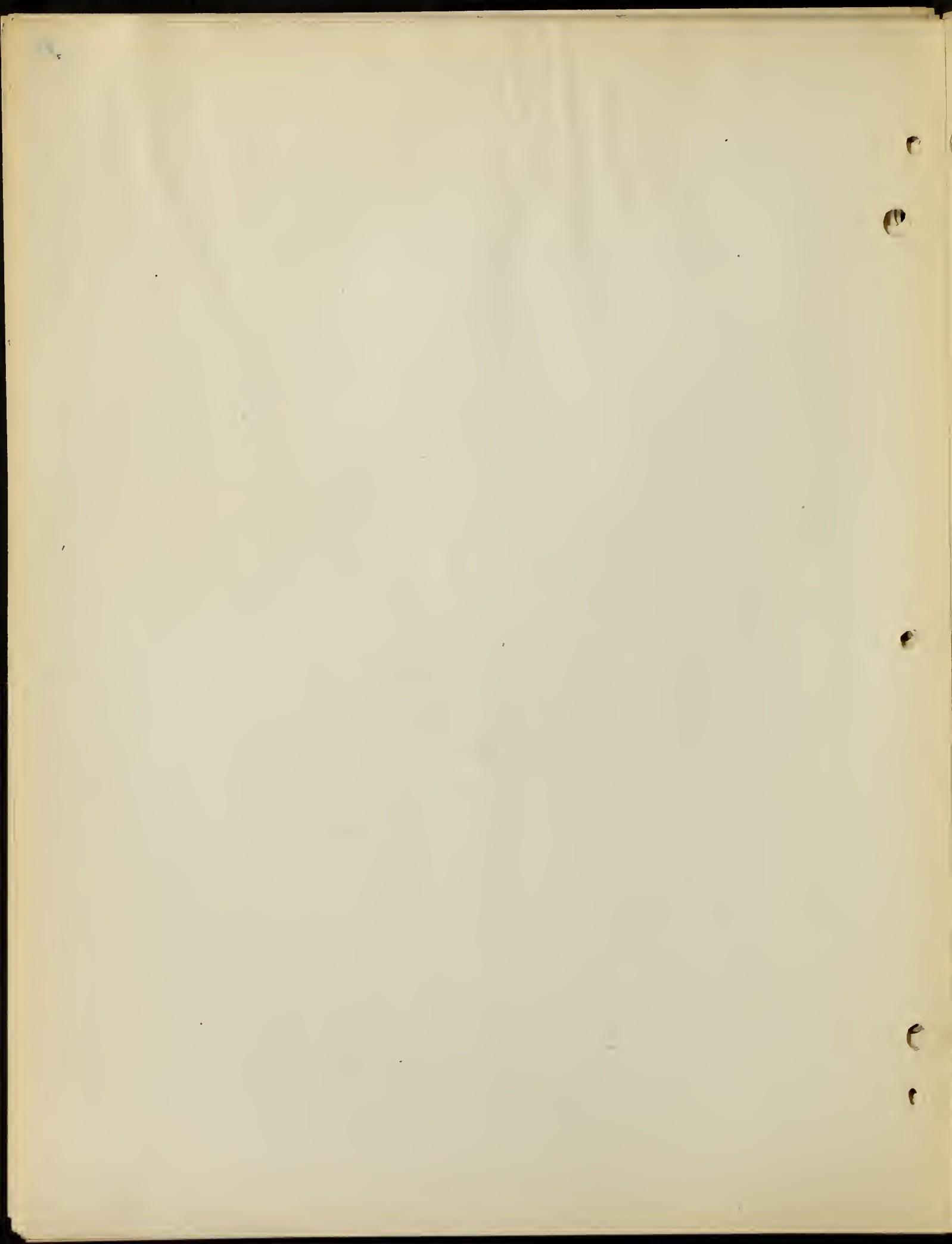


State Teachers' Association, and to the more widespread knowledge of school systems and instruction, the public was slowly roused to provide for and insist upon better schools.

Educational development in Vermont was slow. Problems were almost entirely those of ungraded rural schools and independent districts. Work was confined to the three R's with but few books, and support was meager. For pioneer settlers and crude farming book-learning provided little of practical value, and was accordingly neglected.

Some spasmodic attempts were made to improve the general character of school work, but they do not appear to have been supported by public sentiment, and hence failed largely in their purpose. A state superintendent was appointed in 1827, but the office was abolished in 1830, to be permanently re-established in 1844. Jacob Eddy, a Quaker, established a normal school in 1785, for training men for the vocation of teaching. (Two colleges, however, were founded at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Middlebury College in 1800 and the University of Vermont in 1801.)

In 1827 provision was made by the legislature for improvement of teachers, supervision by committees, and the appointment of a state board with general advisory powers. The repeal of this law in 1858 left the schools without any supervision until 1845 when a law was enacted providing for



town, county and state supervision. During this period high schools were not a part of the system, their place being supplied by numerous academies privately endowed.

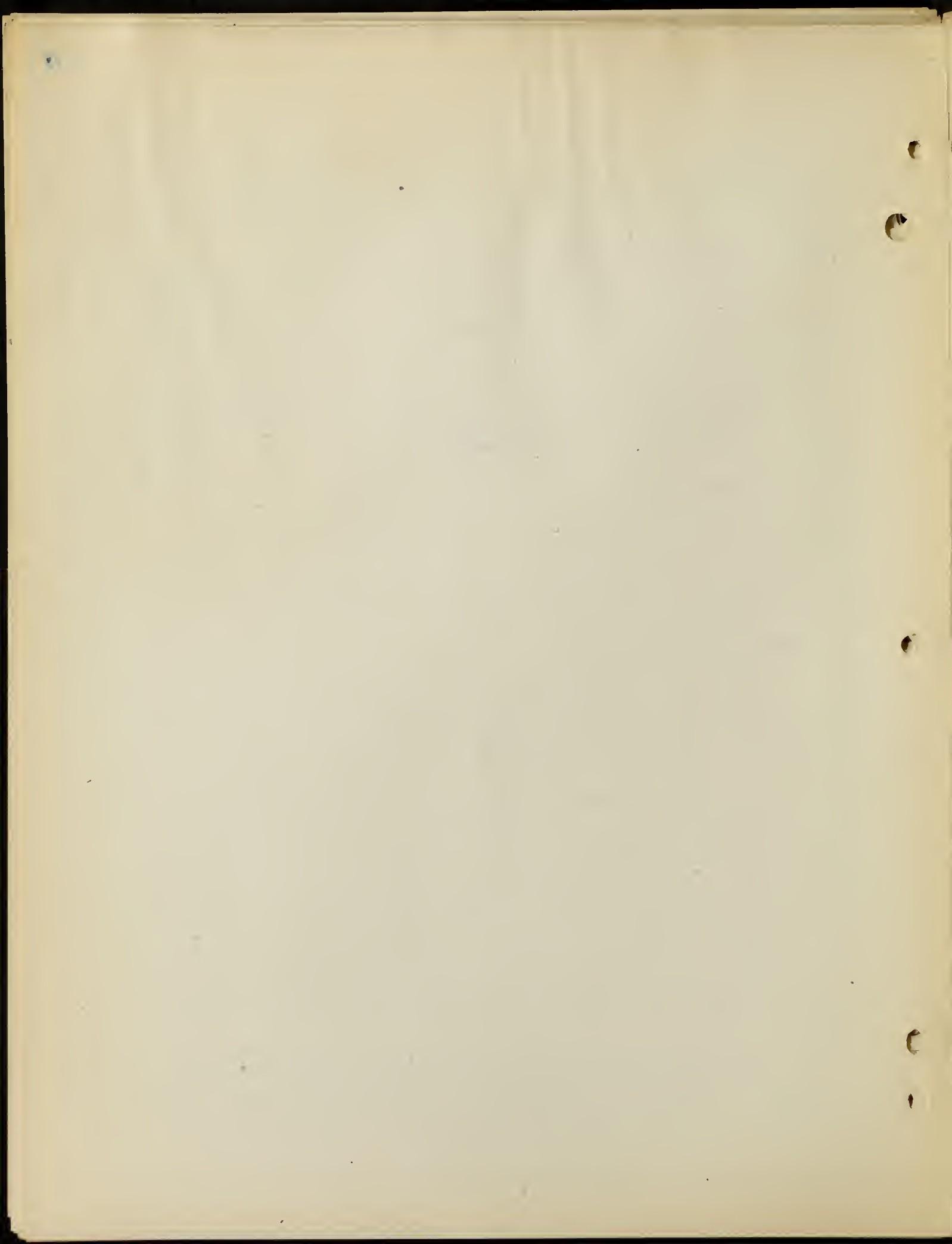
The chief early source of revenue was district taxes. These were levied until 1810, when they were displaced by a town tax of one cent on the dollar of the grand list.\*

(\*The grand list is one per cent of the assessed valuation of real and personal estates, plus the number of polls at \$3.00 each.)

This tax was raised to three cents in 1833, to be assessed and collected under penalty of forfeiture to the county treasurer of twice the amount required to be raised. A further increase to nine cents was made in 1843, and later the amount was made optional.

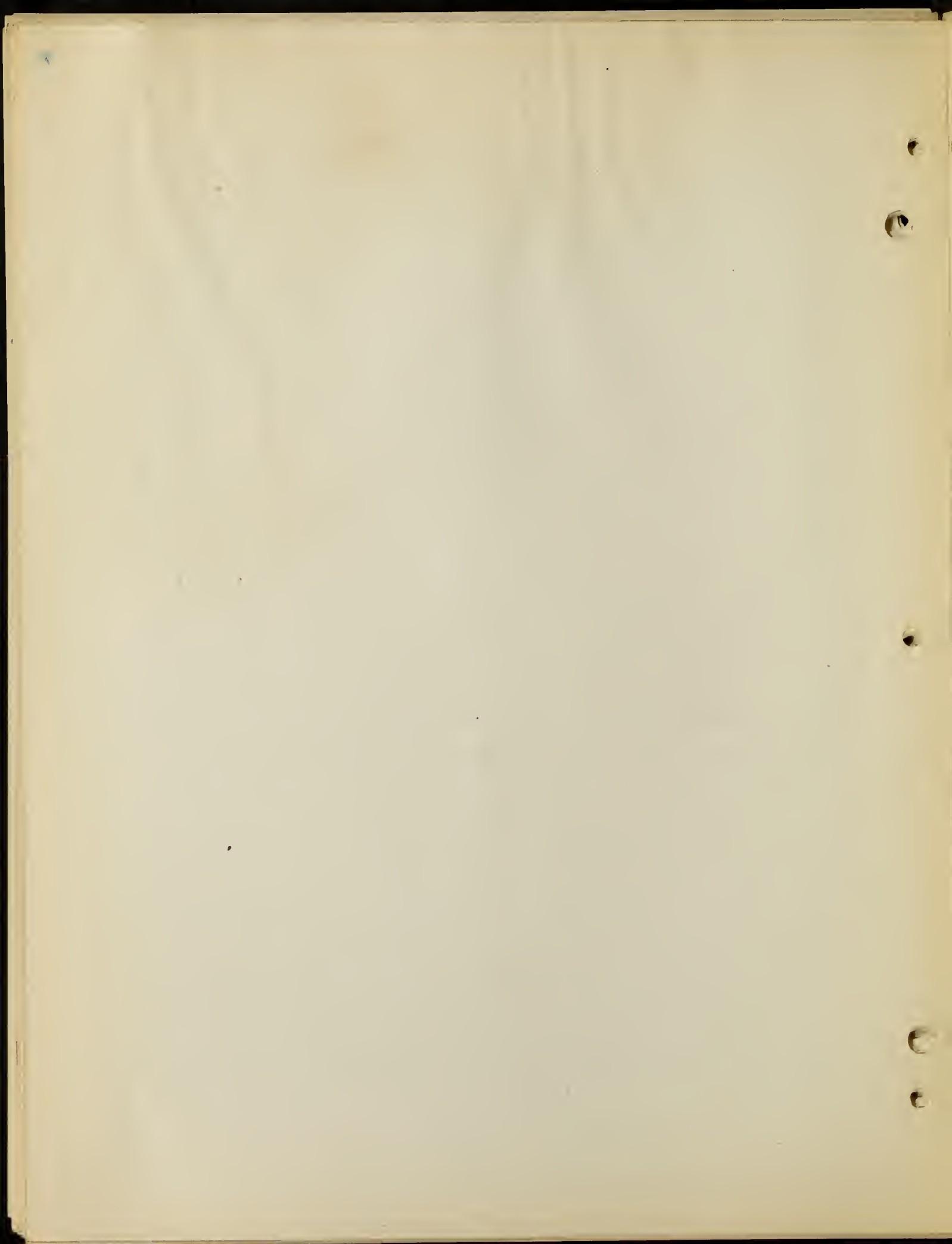
The income from these local taxes was augmented by miscellaneous subscriptions, by charges for tuition and by rental for school lands (tracts set aside for support of schools in early Vermont grants and by town reservations. The income was small.) In 1837, the state received the U. S. deposit fund (\$669086.79) the total income of which was applied to school support. It was provided in this connection that if half the income of school lands amounted to as large a sum as would be raised by tax, the tax might be omitted.

The first half of the century was a period of large families. The school population in 1832, between five and



twenty years, was 104000, an average of 43 to each district. In 1850 the number of pupils in public schools was 19,110, 31 % of the population. In 1890 the number of pupils had shrunk to 65,308, less than 20 % of the population. In 1852 Vermont spent in round numbers \$100,000 for public schools.

From the foregoing discussion it will be seen that the six states were confronted with similar problems of administration and finance, differing more in degree than in kind. The larger cities naturally made more rapid improvement than villages or rural districts. Uncontrolled and unsupervised local control led either to apathy and neglect or to blind experimentation. The separate communities and states sought for the solution of common problems by a great diversity of methods, a very natural result in view of the lack of any sufficient statistics or clearing house for information, guidance and control. The strong influence of individuals is everywhere noted from the stubborn obstruction of local autocrats to the pronounced progress of leaders like John Howland, Henry Barnard, Horace Mann and others. Not until nearly fifty years after the Revolution do we observe any considerable similarity in school legislation that reveals any common clear conception of problems and selects with well-demonstrated effective methods of treating them. During this period public sentiment favored local freedom of government, (a heritage of

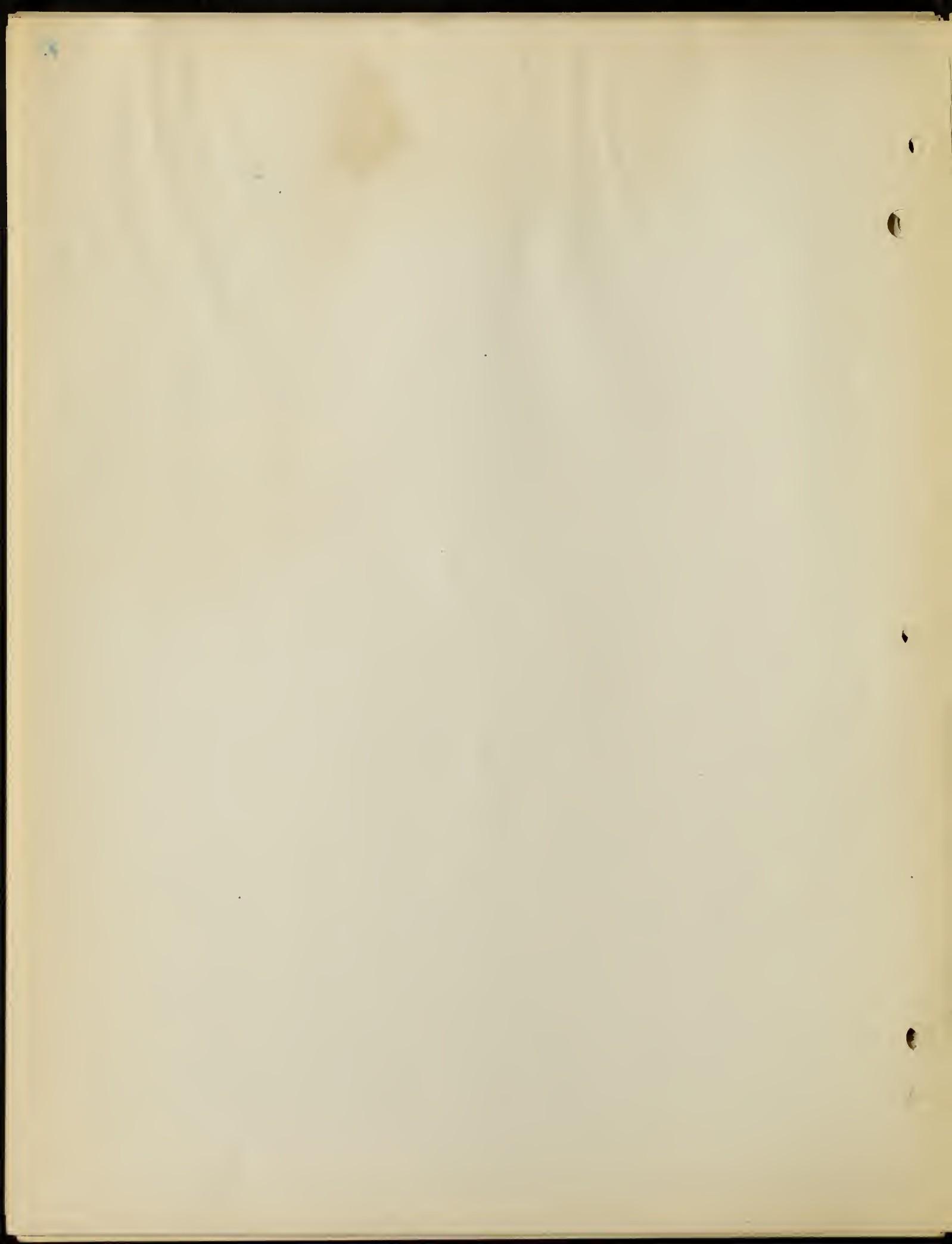


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the Revolution;) and local freedom meant neglect. In New England at large approximately one half the children of school age were receiving a meager education. Secondary education was largely obtained in academies in the northern states, and in academies or town grammar schools in the southern states, but in all states at a considerable private expense. The children of poorer families and those residing in rural sections were badly handicapped.

Repeated acts of legislation and provisions for state aid were made in every state with but partial success. Directive legislation could not be enforced as no one but interested local authorities were empowered to see that it was observed. State aid was often poorly proportioned and distributed in the main according to the size of the need, rather than to the faithful provision of adequate school accommodations, enforced attendance of pupils and assurance of efficient instruction. Too frequently state aid placed a premium upon the evasion of school laws and plain duty.

The chief difficulties were, however, the lack of experience or knowledge as to what constituted good schools and how to secure them, and insufficient appropriations (outside of a few larger towns). In the matter of progress, Massachusetts led with Rhode Island a close second. Connecticut, at first on equal footing with these two states, relapsed to a much inferior plane, and the three northern

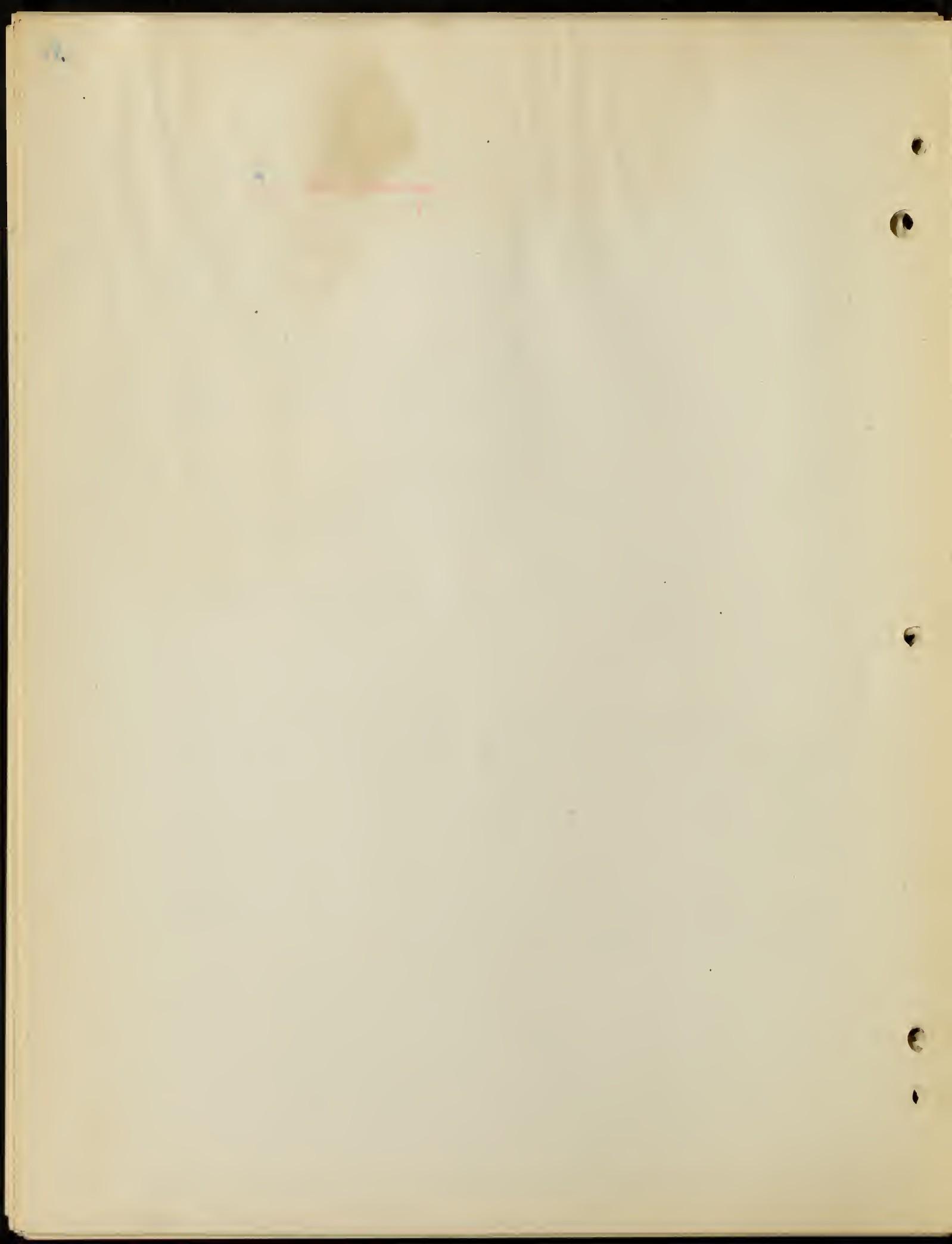


states, owing to their thinly scattered population, lagged well behind. But at length all six states undertook the reconstruction of the common schools in substantially the same manner and at about the same period, 1838-1845. The means adopted were:-

1. A comprehensive code of school laws.
2. State supervision and control (by state boards and commissioners).
3. Improved local supervision.
4. Compulsory local support of fairly generous amounts.
5. Systematic state aid more judiciously distributed.

That such measures would result in significant improvement is self-evident, and such we find to be the result, though local conditions and support continued to be the dominant factors in the quality of the common schools.

The various sources of revenue may be best shown by the following table, though from lack of data an accurate comparison of amounts is not possible.



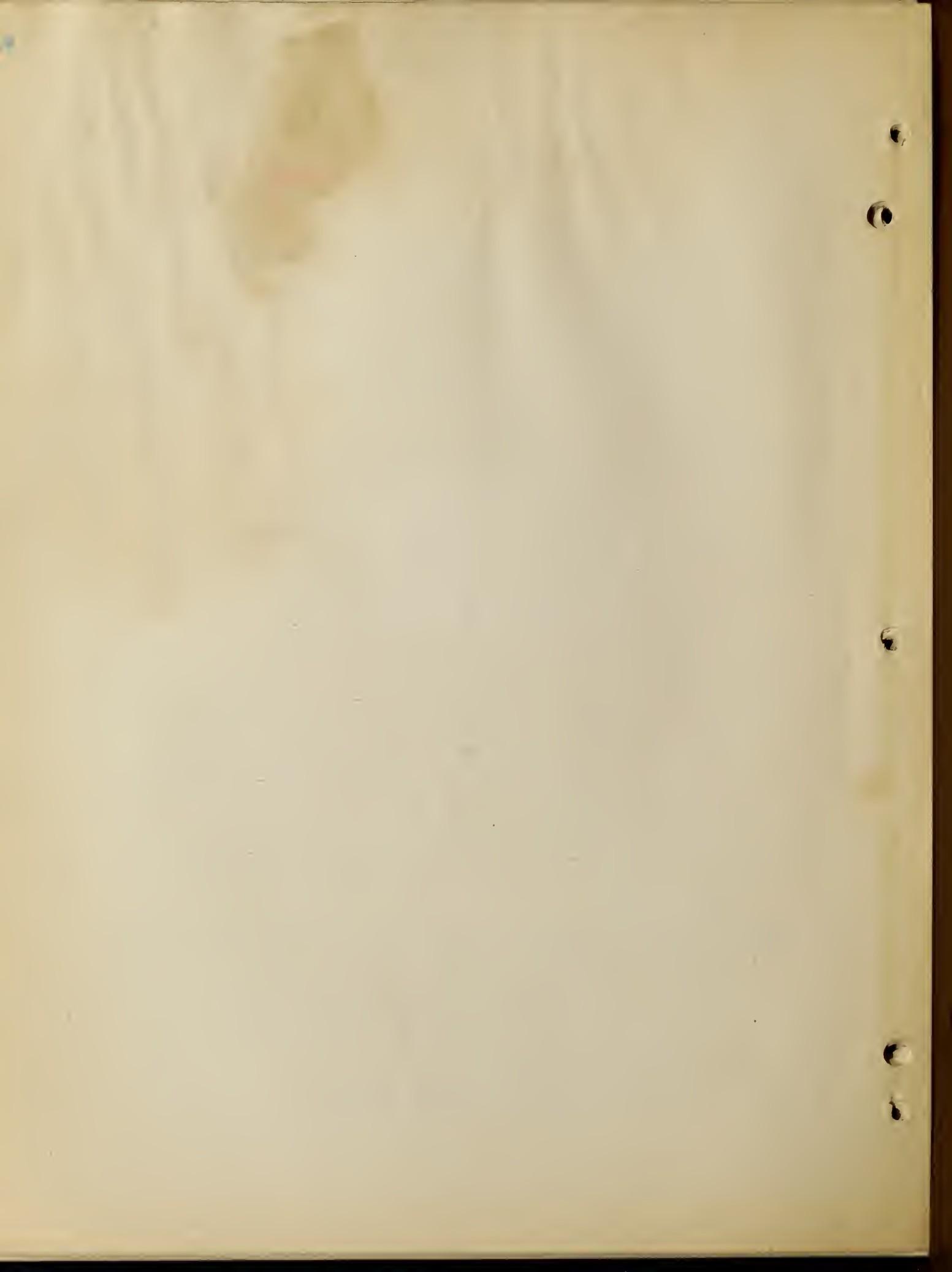
Sources of School Revenue 1800-1845

States	1) Local Taxes 2) Local Support?	State Fund	U.S. Deposit Fund	Rental or Lease of School Lands	Bequests and Subscriptions	Tuition
Maine	1) 1821- Not less than 4¢ for each inhabitant. 2) As required by law.	1833- Bank taxes $\frac{1}{2}\%$ on capital stock	None	1828-Twenty townships reserved paid to State 1832-Income from land reserved for ministry.	Slight	Not required save for books and supplies
New Hampshire	1) Union Rate fixed by legislature. Frequently raised. 2) As required by law.	1828-Bank tax $\frac{1}{2}\%$ on capital stock assigned to common schools.	None	None	Slight	Not required save for books and supplies
Vermont	1) District taxes till 1810. Thereafter town taxes: 1¢ on \$1.00; 1823-3¢ on \$1.00, 1842-7¢ on \$1.00. 2) As required by law.	None	1837- Income of \$67,086.79	Small income from beginning paid direct to town where located	Miscellaneous (Many for Academies)	As needed for deficit.
Massachusetts	1) Not less than 1.50¢ per child between 5 and 15 years. *(Later 3.00) 2) Generous	1834- From sale of lands in Me. Receipts from U.S. for military service 1854-Sale of Western Railroad stock.	None	None	Considerably abolished	At first required. Gradually abolished save cost of books and supplies
Rhode Island	1) 1800 Optional 1828-up to double amt of state app. for previous year. 2) Generally as required	1800-20% of receipts from towns. 1828 Income from lotteries and auctions. 1838-Additions from treasury	1839- Income of \$382,335.30	None	Insignificant	As in Mass.
Connecticut	1) Small tax 1822 on. Practically none 2) Insignificant	1795- From sale of land in Ohio	$\frac{1}{2}$ income of \$763,662.00 up to 1855	None	Society and Local School Fund	As needed to cover deficiencies



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